

IOWA BIRD LIFE

Winter 1996 Volume 66 Number 1



IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

IOWA BIRD LIFE

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FRONT COVER: Immature White Ibis at Coralville Reservoir, Johnson County, 6 September 1995.
Photograph by Thomas H. Kent.

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Officers, Board of Directors, Standing Committees.

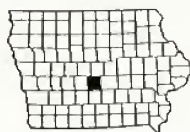
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NOTES ON A MISSISSIPPI KITE NEST IN CENTRAL IOWA

PHILIP J. WALSH

In the United States, the Mississippi Kite's breeding range includes much of southeastern United States and the southern Great Plains. In the last 50 years there have been numerous sightings outside of its traditional range, and it has been expanding its breeding range northward. Most published maps show the breeding range to extend up the Mississippi River valley into southern Illinois. In the spring of 1991, Fred Crane discovered a pair of Mississippi Kites in the backyard of his residence in Clive. Kites were seen in the same area for the next three summers (Clark 1995), and nesting was suspected but no nest was found or young kites seen. With the discovery in 1995 of a nest in Polk County, the species has apparently made another jump north in its continuing range expansion.



Over a period of about six weeks in summer 1995, I visited the nest site about 25 times. Below, I summarize those observations, including notes about the nest, feeding behavior, and the development of the chick. I also describe several other Mississippi Kite sightings in Des Moines during the summer. At the end of this article is a brief history of the Mississippi Kite in Iowa.

1995 NEST

In the middle of May, two adult kites were found near the Olivet Baptist Church in Windsor Heights, a few hundred yards east of Fred Crane's residence. They were often seen perched in a large tree on the edge of an undeveloped wooded area along a small creek that runs between the church and the Crane residence.

In late May and early June, I stopped by the church several times to observe these sleek and graceful raptors. But by early July, the kites had disappeared. I checked the site several times in July, and never saw kites there. I knew that the kites had been seen in this general area each summer for the past several years, and that nesting had been suspected. In early August, thinking about how the birds had been easy to locate early in the summer and had then disappeared, I wondered if perhaps they had a nest secluded somewhere nearby. On 4 August, I stopped at the church, thinking that if I was lucky perhaps I'd see an immature kite flying over the area. The following is a note I scribbled half an hour later:

1:15 p.m. Pulled into Olivet Baptist Church parking lot; noted adult kite perched in cottonwood. Watched adult kite holding/playing with what appeared to be a frog. Did not seem to be actually eating it. After a few minutes, it flew to a neighboring tree. I approached the tree slowly, scanning the tree with binocs, until I noticed (with naked eye) a leafy nest in a fork. I put the binocs on it, and a baby raptor, all white and very fluffy, seemed to be looking directly at me. I studied it briefly (30 seconds) to be confident it was a baby raptor; I looked briefly for an adult bird but did not see one, then I retreated.

I spent less than five minutes in the parking lot. Aware that this was potentially the first recorded Mississippi Kite nest for the state, and surprised by both the

accessibility and the apparent vulnerability of the chick, I was anxious to confirm the sighting, and at the same time worried about disturbing the nest.

That afternoon I phoned Jane Clark of Clive and told her what I had seen. We met at the church around 6 p.m. that evening. When we arrived, there was an adult kite on the nest, and a chick periodically sticking its head up above the rim of the nest. I noted a yellow cere, black-tipped beak, and a very distinct patch of black skin extending forward from the eye.

NEST AND NEST SITE

The nest was located in a large hackberry tree over a well-mowed lawn next to the parking lot behind the church. The kites often perched in a cottonwood growing on the bank of a small creek about 150 feet from the nest tree (Figure 1). The nest was perhaps 50 feet up and perhaps 15 feet below the top of the tree. The nest was made of sticks and twigs, with some leaves showing here and there. It was not very large, perhaps 10-12 inches in diameter, and seemed a bit ramshackle. Kite nests are usually saucer-shaped (Ehrlich et al. 1988), though I'd call this particular nest more bowl-shaped. It was located in a small fork in the tree, and seemed well protected from above.



Figure 1. Adult Mississippi Kite perched in cottonwood tree, 26 August 1995. Photograph by Reid Allen

The nest held one chick. Kite clutches usually have one or two eggs, and there is typically only one clutch per year (Ehrlich et al. 1988, Johnsgard 1990). Kites reuse nests from year to year; successful nests are reused more often than unsuccessful ones (Johnsgard 1990). Perhaps the kites will nest at this location again in 1996.

I had thought that if there was a nest in the area, it would have been further back in the woods somewhere; I was surprised by its location in the middle of such a heavily landscaped area. However, Mississippi Kites have been reported nesting in large mature trees over lawns, along busy streets, and in trees in golf courses (Bolen and Flores 1993, Parker and Ogden 1979, Johnsgard 1990).

FOOD AND FORAGING HABITS

I saw the immature kite being fed by adults on more than 50 occasions. Most of these feedings involved prey that I was unable to identify; on those occasions when I was able to identify the item, cicadas or dragonflies were the typical meal. I also noted butterflies being taken a few times, and, as mentioned above, a frog on one occasion. All of these are typical prey items except the frog (Bolen and Flores 1993).

In the first few days, the typical feeding sequence was something like this: an adult, hawking from the cottonwood tree, swooped out of the tree in pursuit of prey, captured it, and returned to the perch. The bird plucked the wings and (apparently) other inedible parts from the insect, then spent 1-2 minutes carefully studying the surrounding area. Then, the adult left the perch and, with a few quick flaps of its wings, arrived in the nest tree, landing a few feet above the nest. It hopped to the nest, perched on the edge of the nest, holding the prey in its talons, and began tearing portions from the prey and feeding them to the chick. After 2-3 minutes of feeding, the adult returned to its perch in the cottonwood tree.

A common variation, perhaps occurring just as often, involved the second adult. With the chick in the nest and one adult perched in the cottonwood tree, the second adult would fly to the cottonwood with something it had caught, land near the first adult, pass the prey to the first adult, and immediately leave. The first adult would then repeat the rest of the sequence described above, cleaning the prey, scanning the area, and then flying to the nest and feeding the chick. Occasionally, while one adult was already at the nest feeding, the second adult would fly directly into the nest tree and either pass the prey to the adult already there, or alternatively, tear it apart and feed the chick as well, so that the chick had two adults offering food simultaneously.

Newly hatched kites are usually fed food that has been softened in the parent's esophagus and regurgitated. By the time nestlings are 11 days old, they can be fed more solid food and the feeding of regurgitated food stops (Bolen and Flores 1993). I never saw the nestling being fed regurgitated food, suggesting the bird was more than 11 days old by the time the nest was discovered.

One afternoon, as an adult hawked from the cottonwood and the nestling sat quietly in the nest, I watched a small yellow butterfly flutter toward the nest tree. Thirty seconds later the adult swooped out of the cottonwood to within a few feet of the ground near the base of the nest tree, rode its momentum up the other side of the arc, turned and dropped back toward the ground, and then casually returned to the perch. There it carefully plucked the wings from a yellow butterfly and carried the body to the nestling.

As the nestling grew older, the adults spent less time at the nest feeding it. Instead, they would fly in, pass the item to the nestling, and then leave the nestling to tear the food apart on its own. By the time the immature had fledged, it was aggressive about retrieving food from an adult, rushing at the adult and stabbing at the prey the adult held in its beak.

During the time I watched the adults feed the chick, I saw 45 feedings in 517 minutes of observation, an average of 11.5 minutes between feedings. This is amazingly close to the 11 minute feeding interval reported by Bolen and Flores (1993). The longest interval between feedings that I noted was 30 minutes, and the most intense set of feedings that I saw was nine in 35 minutes. In the 15+ hours that I watched kites at this site, I only saw adults eating something themselves twice.

The first time I saw the immature make a serious attempt at hunting was on 3 September, seven days after fledging; it stooped on an insect and missed. On 8 September, 12 days after fledging, the immature glided to the perch in the cottonwood tree carrying what appeared to be a Monarch butterfly. Just after the immature landed, an adult landed next to it. The immature ate the butterfly and, when it finished, the adult handed over prey it had been holding. The adult fed the immature three more times in the next 15 minutes, suggesting that even though the immature was learning to hunt, it was still (at what I guess to be 45 days of age) heavily dependent on the adult for food.

Some lessons must come more slowly than others; on 10 September, the adult passed an insect over to the immature, which immediately tried to gulp down the prey without first de-winging it; the bird quickly pulled the insect back out of its mouth, cleaned it, and then ate.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHICK

When I first found the nest, the chick was completely white and downy. It was very alert, and could easily hold its head up over the rim of the nest. I guessed that it was 1-to-2 weeks old.

On 8 August, four days after finding the nest, I was amazed at how much the chick had changed. When it stretched a wing out, it appeared to be half to three-fourths the length of an adult wing, and the black feather tips were visible. Also, black tail feathers had erupted and the bird had the beginnings of a black band high on its chest.

Eight days later, on 16 August, the chick's head was no longer clean and white, but instead a dirty-white, flecked with dark, and the upperside of the wings were completely covered with dark feathers. The breast was streaked brown and white, the back of the head and neck were a very dark/dirty gray, and the primaries were dark brown, edged with white. The forehead and area above and behind the eye were still white. Some white speckling was visible on the upper-back. The breast was a noticeably different color than the wings--rusty brown vs. dark gray. I also noted that its beak seemed bigger, the cere yellower, the rest of the beak blacker and more well-defined than it had been. When not eating, the chick often preened.

On 19 August I noted that the immature seemed even darker; still pale around the eyes and just above the beak; the top of the head, back of the head, and nape all were very dark. The upper wings were almost black.

On 5 September, I could see that the trailing edge of the upper wing on the immature bird had a thin white edge (where adults have wide white bands). The tail had three distinct white bands, separated by dark bands of equal width.

BRANCHING AND FLEDGING

I had been told that eventually the nestling would start to wander around in the tree, hopping from branch-to-branch, as a prelude to fledging. So I wasn't overly surprised on 23 August when the nest was empty and for 10 minutes I could not locate the nestling. Eventually I found it, about 10 feet above the nest, and 20 feet to the side. From that day on, I could never be sure where the bird would be, and often had to search for several minutes before I located it, although it seemed to have several favorite locations in the nest tree, and could usually be found in one of those.

By 26 August the immature was often seen stretching and flapping its wings. On 28 August it was in the cottonwood tree with both adults. I also saw it take some short flights around the parking lot that day. Assuming that it fledged on 27 August, and using a 31 day incubation period and a 34 day fledging period (Ehrlich et. al. 1988), I estimate that the egg was laid on 23 June and hatched on 24 July. This is somewhat late, according to the literature. Mid-May through mid-June, with a late date of 25 June, is the normal egg-laying season (Bolen and Flores 1993).

Mississippi Kites are migrating south by mid-September, with northern birds heading south earlier (Johnsgard 1990). Again, this makes this nest seem late (kites were observed at the nest site up through 13 September). One possible explanation for the late date is that perhaps this was a second nesting attempt. Most sources say kites only lay one clutch of eggs, although some people think they may attempt a

second laying if the first clutch is destroyed early in the season (Bolen and Flores 1993).

One other note concerning this nest's timeline: immature kites are often fed by adults through 60 days of age (Johnsgard 1990). This immature kite wasn't 60 days old until 22 September, nine days after the last date I saw kites at the nest site. If we assume that the birds started their migration on 13 September, either the immature and at least one of the adults traveled together as they left on migration, or this immature lost contact with its parents more than a week earlier than is typical.

VOCALIZATIONS

Although I occasionally heard the adults calling (usually while they perched in the cottonwood tree), the chick remained silent through most meals. Perhaps this was because there were no other chicks to compete with it for food, or perhaps kites are just quieter than most birds. In any case, it wasn't until the immature had fledged that it became noticeably vocal. On 6 September, I timed the bird as it called. An adult was hunting nearby, and fed the immature six times in the 60 minutes I watched. During that hour, I periodically counted the fledgling's calls. I heard the fledgling call 44 times in 360 seconds, once every 8.2 seconds.

INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER BIRDS

There were several opportunities to watch kites interact with other birds. The adults often seemed to check the nest tree before they landed in it, scanning the area before actually going to the nest. My belief about this behavior was strengthened one afternoon when, with one adult perched in the cottonwood tree, the second adult landed near it, passed it some food, and immediately left. After scanning the area for a minute or two, the adult in the cottonwood left the perch and flew to the west, away from the nest. A minute or so later, I looked up and saw a *buteo*, circling overhead. After another minute or so, I noticed a kite, circling high in the west. A minute or two later, the *buteo* flew off out of sight.

On another occasion, as I watched the chick in the nest, it became agitated, jerking its head back and forth and appearing quite nervous. Suddenly a Turkey Vulture flew over the nest tree, followed by several crows. The crows were chasing a large bird I couldn't identify. All the birds flew on by, and a minute later, the chick was back up on the edge of the nest, calmly preening.

On 28 August Jane Clark and I saw the immature being harassed by Blue Jays. The kite's reaction was to vocalize loudly and move regularly. The jay's behavior seemed odd, as Blue Jays had been in the area all summer, and had never been observed harassing adult kites. Why were adults never harassed, while the immature was? Clark noted the similarity between the plumages of immature Mississippi Kites and Peregrine Falcons, and speculated that perhaps the falcon-like plumage of the immature triggered the jay's behavior.

On 29 August, I watched two adult kites circling over the nest site with a *buteo*. One of the kites swooped at the *buteo* a few times, and it flew off. Later that morning, adult kites were seen chasing a Red-tailed Hawk; a Broad-winged Hawk cruised through the area at the same time, unmolested by the kites. On 10 September, along 51st Street, I watched an immature Mississippi Kite and an immature Broad-winged Hawk circle together overhead. I also observed adult kites and Broad-winged Hawks in the same air-space over the 51st street neighborhood on several occasions.

KITES AND HUMANS

The birds seemed remarkably tolerant of humans near the nest site. On most occasions, they seemed to ignore our presence. On one occasion I believed I was clearly intruding on the birds. It was a very hot day (ca. 95 degrees), and I was at the nest site with one other person. Because of the oppressive heat and sun, we stood much closer to the nest tree than usual (trying to get in the shade), within 20 feet or so of the tree's base. The other person's car was parked near the tree as well. For the first 20 minutes that we watched, the chick remained hunkered down in the nest, only occasionally poking its head up over the rim. One adult stood on the rim of the nest, and a second adult perched nearby in the cottonwood tree. After 20 minutes, the other person left. I then moved my scope back 20 or 30 feet, to the other side of the parking lot. Almost as soon as the car left and I moved away, the chick emerged from the nest and began stretching and preening. It seemed obvious to me that we had encroached on the nest.

There are numerous reports of kites attacking humans in defense of their nest (Parker 1988, Bolen and Flores 1993). In some southern cities where kites are common, at times they have reached nuisance status, especially where they have nested near golf courses (golfers apparently don't have much of a sense of humor about Mississippi Kites dive-bombing them).

OTHER KITES SEEN AT THE NEST SITE

On 26 August, Pam and Reid Allen observed two immature kites, one still at the nest and the other taking brief flights around the area. For 30 minutes, both immature birds and two adults were seen. At one point, the fledgling (as opposed to the bird still in the nest tree) was seen apparently begging for food from one of the adults, which refused to feed it. It is interesting to note that this is the only instance adult kites were seen refusing to feed an immature bird. Eventually, the fledgling flew to the west, leaving two adults and an immature bird still at the site.



Figure 2. Immature Mississippi Kite perched near nest tree, 26 August 1995. Note unbanded tail. Photograph by Reid Allen.

Two days later, Jane Clark and I were again at the church watching the kites when we discovered that three adults were present, in addition to one immature bird. We wondered then how many more kites we would find in the coming days, but no more turned up, leaving 26 August as the only day two immature birds were seen, and 28 August as the only day three adults were seen.

At the time, there was speculation that the second immature bird was from the same nest as the bird we had been watching since 4 August. Reviewing my notes, I doubt this scenario. There were times that the nestling crouched in the nest deep enough to make observing it difficult, but the suggestion of there being two chicks in the nest, taking turns crouching or otherwise hiding during the many 50 times I watched one of them being fed, seems improbable. With the appearance of the third adult on 28 August, I believe both of these "foreign" birds were from another nest, perhaps nearby.

An interesting note about the plumage of the second immature bird: photos show the bird to have a solid, dark tail (Figure 2), rather than the banded tail of most juveniles and subadults. This is an uncommon plumage variation in immature kites (Clark and Wheeler 1987), but should be kept in mind when trying to determine the age of a bird being observed.

KITE SIGHTINGS ELSEWHERE IN DES MOINES

In addition to the observations of kites made at Olivet Baptist Church, I often saw kites over a wooded neighborhood of Des Moines 2.5 miles from the nest site, along 49th and 51st streets, near Greenwood Park. I often wondered whether those kites were the same birds as those nesting in Windsor Heights. The evidence is inconclusive.

On 27 August, I saw a Mississippi Kite along 51st Street that had deep, odd notches in the trailing edge of its wings. I studied it for some time, thinking I could not recall seeing a kite hold its wings in such a manner. Two days later, while watching a kite at Olivet Baptist Church with the same odd wing pattern, Stephen Dinsmore identified the pattern as the result of the bird molting its inner primaries (Figure 3). The next day, 30 August, I again saw a kite over 51st Street with the molt pattern. Over the next few weeks, I repeatedly saw an adult Mississippi Kite with notched wings, the notches receding and being barely noticeable by mid-September. This seems to me good evidence of a single kite ranging over the area from Olivet Baptist Church in Windsor Heights, to 51st Street in Des Moines.



*Figure 3. Adult Mississippi Kite showing wing molt, August 1995.
Photograph by Phil Walsh.*

On 10 September, I was at Olivet Baptist Church for about 30 minutes, during which time the immature was fed nine times by one adult (that still showed traces of recent molt). I left the church and drove directly to 49th Street, where I immediately noted an adult kite directly overhead. This bird showed no discernible evidence of molting. That fact, coupled with the fact I had driven directly to this location from the church, and the adult there was busily engaged in feeding the fledgling, made me confident that the adult at 49th Street was not the same bird I had just seen at the church. But whether it was the second bird from that pair, or a third adult, I can't say.

I observed Mississippi Kites over the 49th/51st Street neighborhood 14 times during the summer; several times I watched an adult disappear into an area of mature oak trees. I tried to locate the bird in the trees, but never could find it.

Also of interest is a kite I saw over 51st Street on 18 August. My notes describe it as having a light gray body, very light colored head, and a gray, banded tail. This is subadult plumage, making this the sixth distinct kite seen in the area in 1995.

On 11 September, I climbed onto the roof of a house on 51st Street and spent 30 minutes watching two kites feed over the area. One of the birds was clearly an adult with wide white bands on the trailing edge of the upper-wing, and the other bird was clearly immature, showing an orange-tinged breast and a barred tail.

FINAL SIGHTINGS

On 13 September, I saw kites three times: an adult hunting over 49th Street in the morning, an immature in the cottonwood tree at Olivet Church, and an adult or immature, with a very white head, high over 51st Street in early afternoon. Those were the last Mississippi Kites I saw in 1995. I actively looked for kites in the next few days, at the nest site as well as the 51st Street area, but did not see any. I assume they had headed south.

COMMENTS.

Mississippi Kites often nest colonially, so it would not be unusual to find several kite nests in an area the size of the greenbelt where this nest was found. Because of the species' quiet nature, nesting colonies of kites are easy to overlook, or underestimate (Parker and Ogden 1979).

Two Mississippi Kite nests were found in Ogallala, Nebraska, in August 1994 and one nest in August 1995. All of these nests were discovered by observers watching from a vantage point overlooking an area where several kites were feeding; when a kite caught something and dove into the canopy with its catch, the location was carefully noted and then searched for a nest (Dinsmore and Silcock 1996). This would be an interesting exercise to conduct, in either the Windsor Heights/Clive area, or the 51st Street/Greenwood Park neighborhood.

BRIEF HISTORY OF MISSISSIPPI KITES IN IOWA

There are no previous reports of Mississippi Kites nesting in Iowa (Dinsmore et al. 1984). Parker and Ogden (1979), believed that sightings of Mississippi Kites during the breeding season were indicative of nesting, and so listed Iowa as a state where kites "nested or probably nested" prior to 1900.

The sightings in 1995 marked the seventh consecutive year Mississippi Kites have been seen in Iowa. The only accepted recent records prior to 1989 are from 1978 (Conrads et al. 1989) and 1980 (Kent 1994).

Recent records for Mississippi Kites in Iowa have been from the following counties: Winneshiek (1978), Fremont (1980), Benton (1989), Johnson (1990), Polk (1991-1995), Black Hawk (1992), Story (1994), Pottawattamie (1994), and Marshall (1994). With the exception of the Pottawattamie and Fremont sightings, all reports have been from central and eastern Iowa. See Appendix A for details.

SUMMARY

Mississippi Kites were casual or accidental in Iowa prior to 1900 and may have nested here prior to 1900. There are no accepted records in Iowa in this century prior to 1978. Mississippi Kites have been seen in Iowa annually since 1989, sometimes as fly-bys but also as weeks-long or months-long residents. In 1991, kites were seen in Polk County, and for the next three years they were observed regularly there. Nesting was suspected, but not confirmed. Mississippi Kites returned to Polk County in mid-May 1995, and a nest was discovered in early August. This nest produced one fledgling. In addition, a second fledgling and a third adult, were also seen near the nest site. Kites were seen numerous times in Polk County within a few miles of the nest site; it is likely that there were additional nests in the area.

Reid Allen provided photographs for this article. Jane Clark visited the nest site numerous times and provided information, ideas, and guidance. Special thanks go to the congregation and staff of Olivet Baptist Church, who gave birders access to their property throughout spring, summer, and fall of 1995.

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APPENDIX A. SUMMARY OF MISSISSIPPI KITE SIGHTINGS IN IOWA, 1978-1995.

1978. One at Cardinal Marsh, Winneshiek County, 29 May (*IBL* 48:72, Kent and Silcock 1985).

1980. Two at Waubonsie State Park, Fremont County, 14 May (*IBL* 50:46, Kent 1994)

1989. Two subadults at Dudgeon Lake, Benton County, from 5 through 9 June (Conrads et al. 1989).

1990. One subadult at Coralville Reservoir in Johnson County on 19 May (Kent 1992).

1991. A pair was seen and documented by many observers in Fred Crane's backyard in Clive in Polk County. They were seen from 22 June through late August. Copulation and other breeding behaviors were noted, but no nest was found (*IBL* 61:114, 62:13).

1992. Three were seen in Clive at the same location as in 1991; two remained throughout June (*IBL* 62:75, 106). There was one other record: a fly-by at Hartman Reserve in Cedar Falls on 16 May (*IBL* 62:75).

1993. One returned to Clive in mid-May and a second bird on 12 June; they were seen carrying nest material on 19, 20 June (*IBL* 63:95).

1994. Mississippi Kites were seen in Clive for the fourth straight year (Clark 1995). Other reports included kites seen on 17 May in Iowa City in Johnson County and 22 May at Peterson Pits in Story County (*IBL* 64:74, Kent 1995). First-year birds were seen over Hitchcock N.A. in Pottawattamie County on 23 September and over Grammer Grove W.A. in Marshall County on 26 September (*IBL* 65:13, Kent 1995).

1995. Mississippi Kites were seen over Olivet Baptist Church on 15 May (Jane Clark, pers. comm.). A pair of adult kites were found at Olivet Baptist Church on 16 May (Pam and Reid Allen, pers. comm., Eloise and Eugene Armstrong, pers. comm.). A nest was found at this location on 4 August. Mississippi Kites were seen in Polk County on numerous occasions throughout the summer. The last reported observation in Polk County was 13 September (*IBL* 66:18).

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TWO PIONEER IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS: CHARLES ALDRICH AND F. E. L. BEAL

JAMES J. DINSMORE

In the late 1800s, ornithology was still a new field of biology. Most recognized leaders in ornithology worked at museums in Europe, and North American workers had little status. Early in 1883, three of America's leading ornithologists saw a need to organize an ornithological society in North America as a way to draw together colleagues at institutions around the country and to gain prestige for work in the New World. By the end of 1883, these three had organized the American Ornithologists' Union (A.O.U.), the first major ornithological society in North America. Since most North American ornithologists lived on the East Coast in the 1800s, I was amazed a few years ago when I saw the names of two Iowans on a list of the founders of the American Ornithologists' Union. Of equal interest to me was the fact that I did not recognize either name as someone who had contributed to early ornithological work in Iowa. This led me to seek further information about these two Iowans, Charles Aldrich and F. E. L. Beal, in an attempt to better understand their role in the study of birds in Iowa in the late 1800s. I have summarized that material below. Most of this information came from obituaries of Aldrich (Brainard 1909, Pammel 1909, Deane 1910) and Beal (McAtee 1917). Information on the founding of the A.O.U. came from a biography of Elliott Coues, one of its founders (Cutright and Brodhead 1981).

FORMATION OF THE AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

The three founders of the A.O.U. were Elliott Coues, an Army medical doctor who, in 1883, was one of the leading ornithologists in North America; William Brewster from Cambridge, Massachusetts, who was associated with Harvard University; and Joel Asaph Allen, also of Cambridge, who likewise was one of the leaders of ornithological work in North America. Interestingly, Allen had spent several months in 1867 in western Iowa and published his observations (Allen 1868), one of the few contributions to Iowa ornithology made by an East Coast ornithologist.

During the winter of 1882-83, Allen, Brewster, and Coues began making plans to form a national ornithological society in North America. One of their most challenging tasks they faced was deciding who to invite. They finally agreed on a carefully selected list of about 50 individuals whom they invited to a meeting in New York City in late September 1883. The three wanted to include all of the "important" people as well as having representation from all parts of the country.

The meeting lasted three days and was a huge success. A constitution was adopted, officers were elected, and several committees were established. Although Allen couldn't attend because of poor health, he was elected President of the organization. Coues was elected to one of two Vice President positions, and Brewster was elected to the council. The A.O.U. was quickly accepted as the leading ornithological society in North America and took a leading role in the study of birds, a role that it has maintained to the present day. Perhaps its most recognized contributions are its journal *The Auk*, now in its 112th year of publication and the periodically revised Check-list of North America birds.

Of the 50 people who were invited to the meeting, 21 actually attended, and they were automatically named Founders of the A.O.U. Charles Aldrich of Webster City

was one of those 21. Two other prominent ornithologists who could not attend, Allen and Spencer Baird of the Smithsonian Institution, were also named Founders. In addition, another 24 individuals who could not attend the meeting were also elected members of the A.O.U., raising the total membership to 47. F. E. L. Beal of Ames was one of those 24. It is interesting to note that Iowans were well represented among the charter members of the A.O.U. Among midwestern states, only Illinois had two members while Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin each had a single member.

CHARLES ALDRICH

Charles Aldrich was born in Ellington in Chautauqua County, New York on 2 October 1828. He attended school there and in 1846 began an apprenticeship in the printing business in Buffalo, New York. In the next several years, he established several newspapers in western New York. In 1857 he moved to Iowa where he settled in Webster City and established the Hamilton Freeman newspaper. He served as Clerk of the Iowa House of Representatives for four general assemblies (1860, 1862, 1866, 1870) and was elected to represent Hamilton County in the state legislature for one term (1882). He also was active in drafting legislation and, in 1870, drafted and pushed through a bill protecting birds. He also served in the Civil War for 18 months.

Although Aldrich had a strong interest in animals and natural history, his interest in history dominated his activities for the last several decades of his life. He personally accumulated a large collection of paintings, letters, portraits, and other memorabilia related to the history of Iowa and the United States. He donated this collection to the state of Iowa in 1884 where it became one of the cornerstones of what is now the State Historical Museum of Iowa. In the 1890s, he was one of the leaders in encouraging the state legislature to build a state historical museum. This work led to the appropriation of money to build the state historical museum just north of the state capitol, a building that housed the state's historical collections until they were moved to a new building in the late 1980s. Aldrich held the position of Curator of the Historical Department of Iowa for many years.



Charles Aldrich

*Photo courtesy of State Historical
Society of Iowa--Des Moines*

Apparently it was this interest in history that led to Aldrich being invited to the inaugural meeting of the A.O.U. One of the organizers of that meeting, Elliott Coues, also had strong interests in history and was aware of Aldrich and his work. It was Coues who added Aldrich's name to the list of invitees (Deane 1910).

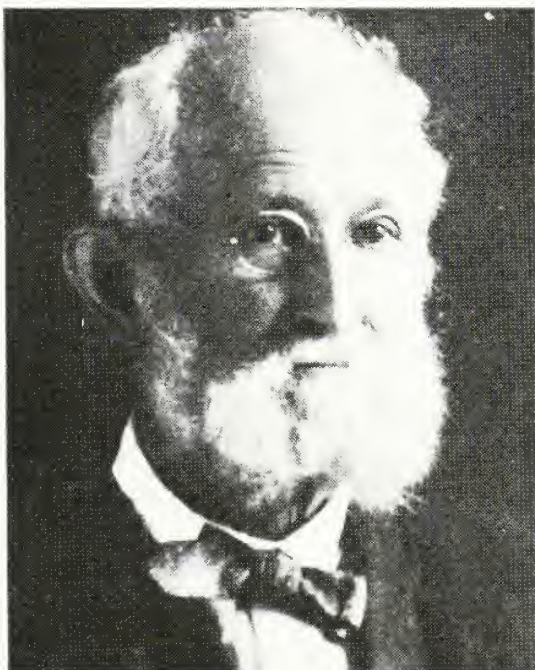
Aldrich moved from Webster City to Boone in 1890 and lived there the rest of his life. Although not really an ornithologist, Aldrich had a life-long interest in nature in general and birds in particular. From 1878 to 1885, he wrote a number of short notes

on birds that were published in the *Auk*, *American Naturalist*, and other national journals. In the late 1890s and early 1900s, he wrote a number of articles on birds that appeared in the Des Moines and other Iowa newspapers. Thus his contributions to ornithology were relatively minimal compared to his work in history where he was more influential. Aldrich died in Boone in March 1908.

F. E. L. BEAL

Foster Ellenborough Lascelles Beal was born on 9 January 1840 at South Groton in Middlesex County, Massachusetts. His parents died when he was young, and he grew up on the farm of a distant relative. His formal schooling was confined to sporadic attendance at several local academies. In 1861 he enlisted in the Union Army and was sent to Maryland but, because of poor health, he was discharged without seeing any action. He spent several years farming and trying to establish a greenhouse business. In 1867 he was admitted to Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.) where he evidently studied civil engineering. He graduated in 1872 and soon moved to Nebraska where he did surveying work for a railroad. When that work was completed in November 1872, he returned to Massachusetts and spent much of 1873 trying to set up a civil engineering firm in Fitchburg. He taught for a year each at M.I.T. and at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis and, in March 1876, accepted a position as a professor of Civil Engineering at the Iowa Agricultural College (now Iowa State University) in Ames.

As a youth, Beal had shown much interest in natural history. He continued to hold that interest during the years he was in college and during his early career years but apparently he did not know that a person could make a living in that field. At Iowa State he also taught courses in zoology and in July 1879, he was appointed Professor of Zoology and Comparative Anatomy. Beal remained at Iowa State until December 1883 when he moved to Massachusetts. He spent most of the next eight years in Massachusetts where he farmed. In February 1892 he accepted a position with the U.S. Biological Survey in Washington, D.C. where he worked for the next 24 years. He died in September 1916 at the age of 76.



F.E.L. Beal

Most of Beal's work at the Biological Survey involved studying the food habits of birds. It was estimated that during his employment at the Biological Survey, he examined 37,825 bird stomachs, an average of about 1,500 per year. These studies resulted in papers describing the economic value of woodpeckers, blackbirds, cuckoos, flycatchers, thrushes, and swallows. One of his reports on the relation of birds to agriculture (Beal 1915) was reprinted more than 50 times. At the time of

Beal's death, more than a million copies had been distributed, making it one of the most popular publications on ornithology of the time. Beal was an important figure during the era of economic ornithology, and his work was widely distributed.

Much less seems to be known about Beal's work in Iowa. Many of his writings were published in newspapers but we know little about them. An obituary (McAtee 1917) lists 23 articles that were published in the Iowa State Register, two others that were probably published there, and several other articles published in newspapers. McAtee found these articles in Beal's scrapbook and suggests that he may have published other newspaper articles that were not in the scrapbook. Such writings are seldom indexed and thus much of Beal's published output may be unknown to us now. McAtee (1917) lists about 19 other publications by Beal from the Iowa State era. Several of these are annual reports from the two academic departments he worked in, and others deal with topics other than birds. Most were short notes. Probably the most substantial publications were two that discussed food habits of various birds in some detail. In one he discussed the food habits of sparrows in winter in Iowa (Beal 1879). Beal estimated that birds ate 196,000 bushels of weed seeds in a winter, a figure that was often cited by other authors seeking to show the value of birds in destroying unwanted weed seeds. The other paper discussed the food habits of woodpeckers and especially seven species found in Iowa (Beal 1883). In all, the known published record of Beal is a fairly modest contribution to ornithology in Iowa.

It is not clear how Beal was known to the three organizers of the A.O.U. or why he was invited to the organizational meeting. Beal did not attend the meeting. He visited Massachusetts in the summer of 1883 and purchased the farm that he moved back to in December. Presumably, in September 1883, when the founders of the A.O.U. were meeting in New York, Beal was teaching classes in Ames. A few of Beal's articles were published in national journals and perhaps it was through those that he received some attention that led to his invitation to the September meeting. Beal was one of 24 men who did not attend the inaugural meeting but who were offered charter membership in the organization. Beal soon let his membership in the A.O.U. lapse but was reelected to membership in 1887 and was made a Fellow of the organization in 1901. He attended nine meetings of the A.O.U. and read a paper at one meeting but apparently never served as an officer of the group or was active in other ways.

ALDRICH, BEAL, AND IOWA ORNITHOLOGY

The two Iowans who were charter members of the A.O.U. had somewhat similar backgrounds. Both were born in the East, both were Civil War veterans, and both moved to Iowa to establish careers. In 1883, when he was invited to the organizational meeting of the A.O.U., Beal was within a few months of leaving Iowa. He went on to gain much greater prominence as an ornithologist, but that renown came after he had left Iowa. On the other hand, Aldrich remained in Iowa but shifted most of his attention to history where he gained state and even national prominence.

Surprisingly, although these two Iowans were well enough known to be invited to the exclusive meeting to establish the A.O.U., their contributions to ornithology in Iowa were modest at most. Neither was mentioned as a contributor to the first comprehensive book on Iowa birds (Anderson 1907), a publication that relied heavily on material from observers around Iowa. Both published relatively little on Iowa birds, and much of what they did publish had little lasting influence. Both of them

apparently often published articles in newspapers and as previously mentioned, those publications have never really become part of the literature on Iowa birds. This is unfortunate since both Aldrich and Beal obviously were very talented individuals.

Aldrich and Beal lived only about 50 miles apart from 1876 to 1883. Aldrich apparently visited Iowa State College frequently and because of their mutual interest in birds, the two became acquainted (Pammel 1909). During one visit to Ames, Aldrich found a nest that he mistakenly identified as that of a Snow Bunting (Aldrich 1881). Beal corrected this mistake and mentions their visit (Beal 1882) but other than that little is known of how well they knew each other.

The last publication on Iowa birds by Aldrich was published in 1884, shortly after Beal returned to Massachusetts. Interestingly, in the article Aldrich predicted that the continued draining of wetlands would have a disastrous effect on the populations of Red-winged Blackbirds (Aldrich 1884). Thus, just at the time when these two men were involved with the organization of the A.O.U., they stopped having any influence on the study of birds in Iowa. Although a number of other individuals were actively studying Iowa's birds in the late 1800s, the state received little national attention until 1907 when the first comprehensive study of the state's birds was published (Anderson 1907).

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FIELD REPORTS--FALL 1995

THOMAS H. KENT

WEATHER

August was unusually hot, 5.9 degrees above normal. The average rainfall was unequally distributed, being wetter than normal in the north and dryer in the south.

September was 2.1 degrees cooler than normal. Rainfall was slightly below normal, but again above normal in the north and much below normal in the south. There was a mild cold front on the 1st and a much stronger one on the 8th. A strong cold front on the 20th to 22nd brought freezing temperature to 90% of the state.

October was slightly cooler and dryer than normal, with cooler temperatures over the last 10 days and snow on the 30th.

November was very cold, 6.8 degrees below normal. Precipitation was normal with most of it as rain on the 1st and snow on the 10th and 27th.



GENERAL TRENDS

The fall season was remarkable for the number of regular and rare species seen, and many of these were found in unusual numbers.

A few early migrant warblers were noted from the 15th to 20th of August, but the first major influx was with a mild front on September 1st. A second front on the 8th produced more warblers for the Fall I.O.U. meeting. The warbler migration was less prolonged than usual with only a few scattered late migrants.

Shorebird habitat was not extensive, but good numbers and variety of shorebirds were found at some locations such as Saylorville and Coralville reservoirs.

The largest influx of waterfowl occurred on November 2nd and 3rd when huge flocks interferred with radar at airports in Omaha and Des Moines (*Field Notes* 49:894, 1995). Late October and November were good for loons, grebes, and rare ducks.

There was a massive invasion of Red-breasted Nuthatches beginning in August. Common Redpoll and Evening Grosbeak late in the period suggest that this is an invasion year.

UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

Accidental species reported were Clark's Grebe, White Ibis, Eurasian Wigeon, *Mississippi Kite, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Ruff, Jaeger species, *Laughing Gull, Mew Gull, *California Gull, *Sabine's Gull, Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird, Black-billed Magpie, and Bullock's Oriole. Those marked with "*" will become casual with the next edition of the Official Checklist of Iowa Birds. The White Ibis will be the first for the state if accepted by the Records Committee. Bullock's Oriole will be added to the state list based on a split of Northern Oriole into Baltimore and Bullock's. Rufous-sided Towhee will be split into Eastern and Spotted towhees.

There are many records of Spotted Towhees in Iowa but only a few of Bullock's Oriole.

Casual species reported include Red-throated Loon, Pacific Loon, Ibis species, Whimbrel, Red Knot, **Thayer's Gull, **Lesser Black-backed Gull, **Black-legged Kittiwake, Pine Grosbeak, and **Eurasian Tree Sparrow. Those marked with "***" will become regular.

Other rare birds of note include Mute Swan, Prairie Falcon, Yellow Rail, Hudsonian Godwit, Marbled Godwit, White-rumped Sandpiper, Least Tern, Snowy Owl, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Varied Thrush, Cerulean Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, Henslow's Sparrow, Common Redpoll, and Evening Grosbeak.

SPECIES DATA (* = documented)

Red-throated Loon: All: 1 first-basic at Saylorville Res. on 29 Oct (*SJD)[2nd earliest], 1 basic at Pleasant Creek L. on 11 Nov (*THK), and 1 basic at Saylorville Res. on 16, 17 Nov (*SJD).

Pacific Loon: All: 1 at Twelve Mile L. in Union Co. on 26 Oct (*THK, *JLF), 1 at Little Wall L. on 28 Oct (*MPR), 1 at Rathbun Res. on 29 Oct (*RLC), 1 at Pleasant Creek L. on 31 Oct (*THK), and 1 at L. Icaria in Adams Co. on 21 Nov (*SJD)[3rd latest].

Common Loon: First: 4 at Spirit L. on 1 Aug (ETH). Last: 1 at Hallett's Quarry in Story Co. on 14 Nov (HZ). High counts: 45 on 7 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SJD) and 28 at Coralville Res. on 1 Nov (THK). Other early singles were at Trumbull L. on 12 Aug (LAS), Spirit L. on 30 Aug (SJD), West Des Moines on 9 Sep (PJW), and Little Wall L. on 20, 26 Sep (THK, SJD).

Pied-billed Grebe: High counts: 364 at Saylorville Res. on 14 Sep (SJD), 208 at Little Wall L. on 26 Sep (SJD), and 120 at Grover's L. on 30 Sep (LAS).

Horned Grebe: First: 1 at Terra L. from 13 Aug to 21 Oct was in intermediate plumage when first seen but gradually molted to basic plumage (*BE)[record earliest]. Last: 2 on 19 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SJD). High counts: 13 at Rathbun Res. on 26 Oct (JLF, THK) and 12 on 30 Oct at Little Wall L. (SJD). The only September report was of 5 at L. Manawa on the 24th (BKP/LJP), but there were October reports from 10 locations and November reports from 4 locations.

Eared Grebe: First: 18 Aug at Grover's L. (LAS). Last: 22 Nov at Twelve Mile L. (SJD). High count: 3 on 4 Nov at Spirit L. (LAS). There were reports from 11 locations. The only one from eastern Iowa was at Pleasant Creek L. on 16 Oct (DLD).

Western Grebe: First: 4 at Spirit L. and 1 at Elm L. in Wright on 30 Aug (SJD). Last: 21 Nov at L. Icaria (SJD). High count: 6 on 21 Oct at Spirit L. (JJD, SJD). There were reports from 13 locations, which is more than usual.

Clark's Grebe: 1 on 12, 13 Nov at Pleasant Creek L. (*CE, *THK, *JLF).

American White Pelican: High count: 10,000 on 16 Sep at Saylorville Res. (SJD, JJD). Pelicans are widespread in Iowa throughout the fall period with increasing numbers found in eastern Iowa, where they were once uncommon. The high count for eastern Iowa was 700 on 1 Sep at Coralville Res. (THK). At Saylorville Res., 164 lingered on 4 Nov (SJD). Singles, several described as injured, were noted at 7 locations in November.

Double-crested Cormorant: High count: 6,100 on 1 Oct at Saylorville Res. (BE).

American Bittern: All: 27 Oct at Big Wall L. (SJD).

Least Bittern: All: 7 on 2 Aug at Forney L. (Carl Priebe fide Ross Silcock fide JJD) and 1 on 26 Sep at Big Wall L. (SJD).

Great Blue Heron: High count: 115 on 13 Sep at Coralville Res. (THK).

Great Egret: Last: 18 Nov at Saylorville Res. (HZ). High count: 165 on 3 Sep at Runnells A. (SJD).

Snowy Egret: All: 1 imm. on 2, 10 Aug at Waubonsie W.A. (THK, JLF), 1 ad on 7 Aug at Waubonsie W.A. (SJD), 1 on 6 Aug at Heron Bend in Lee Co. (CE), 1 on 29 Aug at Midwest Power Ponds (BKP/LJP), and at Union Slough N.W.R. 2 from 13 to 17 Sep (MCK) and 1 imm. on 19 Sep (THK, photo), 20 Sep (JJD), and 27 Sep (MCK)[3rd latest].

Little Blue Heron: All: 1 ad. on 10 Aug at Waubonsie W.A. (JLF).

Cattle Egret: Last: 3 on 21 Oct at Sandhill L. in Woodbury Co. (BFH). High count: 400 on 10 Aug at Waubonsie W.A. (JLF). The only other locations were also from the western edge of the state, with 4 on 24 Sep in Monona Co. (PE) and 2 on 2 Oct at Port Neal in Woodbury Co. (BFH).

Green Heron: Last: 17 Sep near Palo in Linn Co. (DLD).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: Last: 1 imm. on 12 Nov at Spirit L. (*LAS)[record latest except for two winter records] and 1 imm. on 11 Nov at Saylorville Res. (BE, DT)[ties 2nd latest]. From 1 to 3 were reported from four other locations.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: All: 2 imm. on 7, 21 Aug at Waubonsie W.A. (SJD, BKP/LJP), 1 imm. on 12, 22 Aug at Saylorville Res./Big Creek L. (DT, MPr), and 1 imm. on 9 Sep at Green Island W.A. (HZ, JJD, SJD).

Ibis species: All: 2 on 8 Sep at Waubonsie W.A. (BKP/LJP), 1 on 27 Sep at Bays Branch W.A. (SJD), 1 on 21 Oct at Sandhill L. in Woodbury Co. (BFH)[3rd latest], and 1 ad. and 1 imm. on 25 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SJD-details)[record latest].

White Ibis: Iowa's first and overdue record of this species was a very cooperative immature bird found on 5 Sep at Coralville Res. by James Huntington and seen by many until 16 Sep (*CE, *JLF, *THK-photos, *SJD-photo, *PCP).

Tundra Swan: First: 3 ad. on 29 Oct at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK). Last: on 26 Nov, 7 at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK) and 800 in Allamakee Co. (CE). The latter is also the high count. Birds at other locations were 4 on 2 Nov at Rush L. in Osceola Co. (Craig Van Otterloo fide DCH), 1 imm. on 3 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SJD), and 1 ad. on 17 Nov at Bays Branch W.A. (SJD).

Trumpeter Swan: All: 1 ad. on 4 Aug near Cosgrove in Johnson Co. remained from the summer period (THK); 3 on 4 Nov at Spirit L. had green neck bands (LAS); 2 ad. that wintered at Black Hawk L. last winter returned with an imm. in tow on 11 Nov (PE, THK-photos); 9 introduced birds with various tags were in the "pen" at Bays Branch W.A. on 15 Nov (THK); and 2 ad. on 26 Nov at Dale Moffitt Res. in Polk Co. had orange patagial tags.

Mute Swan: All: 1 ad. on 29 Oct, 1 Nov at a gravel pit in NW Marshall Co. (MPr).

Greater White-fronted Goose: First: 10 Sep at Big Sand Mound Preserve (PCP). High count: 200 on 25 Oct at Saylorville Res. (JLF, THK).

Snow Goose: First: 3 Sep at Little Swan L. in Dickinson Co. (LAS). High count: an estimated 450,000 at De Soto N.W.R. in early and mid November (George Gage fide JJD). Huge migrant flocks moving south on 2 and 3 Nov interfered with radar at airports in Omaha and Des Moines (JJD).

Ross's Goose: First: 30 Oct at Swan L. in Carroll Co. (DS). High count: 8 on 25 Nov at De Soto N.W.R. (SJD).

Canada Goose: No one reported this abundant species that is widespread across Iowa and remains to winter.

Green-winged Teal: First: 22 Aug at Heron Bend (SJD).

American Black Duck: First: 24 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SJD). High count: 35 on 24 Nov at Pool 9 in Allamakee Co. (THK). From 2 to 4 were reported from 4 other locations.

Northern Pintail: High count: 15,000 on 13 Oct at Coralville Res. (SJD).

Blue-winged Teal: Last: an injured female at Ottumwa on 28 Nov (SJD). High count: 900 on 13 Sep at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

Northern Shoveler: High count: 200 on 2 Nov at L. Manawa (BKP/LJP).

Gadwall: First: 24 Aug at Trumbull L. (THK). High counts: 1,040 on 29 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SJD) and 1,000 on 29 Oct at Rathbun Res. (RLC).

Eurasian Wigeon: A male on 27 Oct at De Soto N.W.R. (*TJH) is only the second fall record; the other was from 1933.

American Wigeon: High count: 660 on 13 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

Canvasback: High count: 15,000 on 15 Nov at Montrose in Lee Co. (SJD). A pair with 2 young was at West Hottes L. in Dickinson Co. on 18 Aug (LAS). A flightless pair at Montrose on 22 Aug could have summered (SJD).

Redhead: High count: 150 on 4 Nov at Rathbun Res. (RLC).

Greater Scaup: First: 1 female on 30 Oct at Little Wall L. (SJD-details). From 1 to 3 were reported from 7 other locations across the state.

Lesser Scaup: High count: 7,600 on 2 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SJD).



Trumpeter Swan, Black Hawk Lake, Sac County, 15 Nov 1995. Photo by Thomas H. Kent

Oldsquaw: First: 28 Oct at Rice L. in Winnebago Co. (CJF). There were reports from 6 other locations.

Black Scoter: All: 1 at Pine L. in Hardin Co. from 24 Oct to 3 Nov (MPr)[3rd earliest], 1 on 24 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SJD)[3rd earliest], 1 on 31 Oct at Cedar L. (THK), and 2 on 19 Nov at Pleasant Creek L. (CE).

Surf Scoter: All: 4 on 6 Oct and 1 on 7 Oct at Spirit L. (*ETH, SJD), 1 or 2 from 10 Oct to 5 Nov at Pleasant Creek L. (SJD, CE, m.ob.), 1 on 18 Oct at Sun Valley L. in Ringgold Co. (SJD), 1 on 30 Oct at Hallett's Quarry (JJD, SJD), 1 on 11 Nov at Rathbun Res. (RLC), and 1 on 16 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

White-winged Scoter: All: 1 female/imm. on 28 Oct at Twelve Mile L. (SJD), up to 4 males from 2 to 12 Nov at Pleasant Creek L. (THK, m.ob.), 1 female/imm. (or more?) from 4 to 18 Nov on or near Spirit L. (LAS, ETH, SJD), and a male and female/imm. from 16 to 24 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SJD, m.ob.).

Common Goldeneye: First: on 4 Nov, 8 at De Soto N.W.R. (BKP/LJP) and 2 at Saylorville Res. (SJD). High count: 2,000 on 24 Nov at Pool 9 in Allamakee Co. (THK).

Bufflehead: High count: 140 on 24 Nov at West Okoboji (ETH).

Hooded Merganser: High count: 62 on 22 Oct at Saylorville Res. (DT).

Common Merganser: First: 8 on 4 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SJD). High count: 4,000 on 27 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

Red-breasted Merganser: First: 23 Oct at Hallett's Quarry (SJD). High count: 109 on 8 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

Ruddy Duck: High count: 500 on 21 Oct at Pool 13 in Clinton Co. (PCP).

Turkey Vulture: High count: 47 on 24 Sep at Stone P. (BFH).

Osprey: First: 1 Aug at Saylorville Res. (DT). Last: 4 Nov in Appanoose Co. (RLC). At hawk-watches, 17 were seen at Grammer Grove W.A. (BPr) and 7 (unusually low count) were at Hitchcock N.A. (BKP/LJP). By contrast, the roving Steve Dinsmore saw 49 during the fall. There were seven August reports.

Mississippi Kite: A downy young was still in the nest at Clive on 14 Aug (JLF), and an adult and a juvenile were seen up to 10 Sep (JRC). The last bird was seen on 13 Sep (PJW)[3rd latest].

Bald Eagle: High count: 90 on 24 Nov in Allamakee Co. (THK). Scattered adults and immatures were seen from August through October and larger numbers appeared in November. The percentage of young birds was high as exemplified by the 26 immatures and 8 adults at Saylorville Res. on 16 Nov (SJD).

Northern Harrier: High counts: 11 on 2 Oct at Hitchcock N.A. (BKP/LJP) and 27 on 14 Oct at Grammer Grove W.A. (BPr).

Sharp-shinned Hawk: First: 30 Aug in Osceola Co. (SJD). High counts: 134 on 1 Oct at Grammer Grove W.A. (BPr) and 36 on 2 Oct at Hitchcock N.A. (BKP/LJP). Other high counts at Grammer Grove W.A. were 104 on 28 Sep and 109 on 17 Oct (BPr).

Cooper's Hawk: High count: 12 on 13 Oct at Grammer Grove W.A. (BPr).

Northern Goshawk: First: 24 Sep at Hitchcock N.A. (BKP/LJP). There were 5 other sightings, all of immatures.

Red-shouldered Hawk: All: 23 Sep at Effigy Mounds N.M. (DeC), 15 Oct at Algona (MCK), and 28 Nov at Mason City (CJF).

Broad-winged Hawk: First: 1 ad. on 3 Aug n. of Iowa City (JLF). Last: 21 Oct at Grammer Grove W.A. (*BPr)[2nd latest]. High counts: on 20 Sep, 178 at Hitchcock N.A. (BKP/LJP) and 81 at Grammer Grove W.A. (BPr). Another late bird was at Coralville Res. on 13 Oct (SJD)[3rd latest].

Swainson's Hawk: First: 13 Sep at Hitchcock N.A. (BKP/LJP). Last: 3 Oct in Marshall Co. (SJD). High count: 97 on 2 Oct and a record 245 for the season at Hitchcock N.A. (BKP/LJP). The only other report was 1 on 27 Sep at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

Red-tailed Hawk: High counts: 139 on 20 Oct at Hitchcock N.A. (BKP/LJP) and 90 on 14 Oct at Grammer Grove W.A. (BPr). Harlan's Hawks were reported in Dickinson Co. on 29 Oct (LAS), in Cass Co. on 14 Nov (PJW), and in Hardin Co. on 17 Nov (MPr). An albino was in Johnson Co. on 21 Nov (THK).

Rough-legged Hawk: First: 12 Oct in Jasper Co. (JLF).

Golden Eagle: All: 1 imm. on 19 Oct at Waterman Creek in O'Brien Co. (Michelle Olson fide LAS), 2 on 16 Nov and 4 on 19 Nov along county road A26 in Allamakee Co. (JLF, DeC), and 1 ad. on 28 Nov in Cherokee Co. (DK).

Merlin: First: 30 Aug at Spirit L. (SJD-details)[ties 2nd earliest]. Last: 22 Nov at Ida Grove (PE). There were 15 reports from September and 8 from October for this increasingly common species.

Peregrine Falcon: First: 19 Aug at Heron Bend in Lee Co. (CE). Last: 26 Nov in Clay Co. (LAS). There were 15 reports from September and 6 from October - a pattern very similar to Merlin.

Prairie Falcon: All: 7 Nov at Bays Branch W.A. (SJD-details).

Gray Partridge: Reports were from O'Brien, Sac, Calhoun, Cerro Gordo, Guthrie, and Story counties.

Ring-necked Pheasant: An albino on 19 Nov was in Cherokee Co. (DBi).

Ruffed Grouse: All: 2 on 16 Sep at Stephen's F. in Lucas Co. (SJD) and 3 on 16 Nov at Effigy Mounds in Allamakee Co. (JLF).

Northern Bobwhite: 1 was on a porch in Clive on 29 Oct (JRC).

Yellow Rail: All: 2 on 28 Sep at Snake Creek M. (THK) and 1 on 14 Oct at L. Macbride (JLF).

Virginia Rail: All: 23 Sep at Otter Creek M. (CE) and 27 Sep at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK).

Sora: Last: on 27 Sep, 6 at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK) and 1 at Snake Creek M. (THK).

Common Moorhen: All: ad. and yg. on 2 Aug at Fomey L. (Carl Priebe fide Ross Silcock fide JJD), 1 on 30 Aug at Union Slough N.W.R. (SJD), 5 on 9 Sep at Green Island W.A. (SJD, m.ob.), and 3 on 9 Sep at Goose L. in Clinton Co. (SJD, m.ob.).

American Coot: High counts: 8,200 on 19 Oct at Saylorville Res. (BE) and 14,000 on 30 Oct at Little Wall L. (SJD).

Sandhill Crane: All: 2 ad. and 2 imm. on 4 Sep at Sweet M. (DeC), 2 ad. and 1 imm. on 8 Sep at Muskrat Sl. (SJD, JJD, HZ), 2 on 9 Sep at Green Island W.A. (SJD, JJD, HZ), 2 on 24 Sep at Sabula in Jackson Co. (PCP), 2 on 3 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SJD), 1 on 30 Oct at Amana L. (CE), and 50 on 4 Nov in NW Sioux Co. (Marty Eby fide SJD).

Black-bellied Plover: First: 1 Aug at Coralville Res. (CE-details)[ties record earliest]. Last: 4 Nov at Big Creek L. (MPR, SJD). High count: 12 on 30 Sep at Saylorville Res. (BE). Small numbers were reported from 10 locations in August and September.

American Golden-Plover: First: 15 Aug at Coralville Res. (THK). Last: a bird with an injured wing at Swan L. in Johnson Co. from 21 to 27 Nov (THK-photos)[record latest]. High count: 30 on 13 Oct at Coralville Res. (SJD). Small numbers were reported from eight locations.

Semipalmated Plover: Last: 24 Oct at Coralville Res. (THK). High count: 15 on 4 Sep at Coralville Res. (THK).

Piping Plover: All: 1 imm. on 5 Aug at Port Neal (BFH); 2 on 9 Aug (BKP/LJP), 3 on 10 Aug (JLF), and 1 on 8 Sep (BKP/LJP) at Midwest Power Ponds; 1 or 2 on 13 to 19 Aug at Rathbun Res. (TNJ, m.ob.); 1 on 16 Aug at Coralville Res. (CE, THK); and 1 on 30 Aug at Meinking M. in Dickinson Co. (SJD).

Killdeer: High count: 131 on 20 Aug in Hardin Co. (HZ).

American Avocet: Last: 7 on 30 Oct at Heron Bend in Lee Co. (JLF). High count: 38 on 13 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SJD). Reports from 6 locations were more than usual for fall.

Greater Yellowlegs: Last: 17 Nov at Paulina in O'Brien Co. (DK).

Lesser Yellowlegs: Last: 4 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

Solitary Sandpiper: A bird found at L. Macbride on 8 Oct (JH) remained to 13 Oct (THK-photo)[ties record latest].

Willet: Last: 1 Oct at Bjorkboda M. in Hamilton Co. (MJ-details)[3rd latest]. Other singles were at the four reservoirs and Blue L., and 2 were at Runnells A. (m.ob.).

Spotted Sandpiper: Last: 3 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

Upland Sandpiper: Birds were at the Seven Cities Sod Farm in Scott Co. from 22 Aug to 9 Sep with a high count of 16 on 31 Aug (PCP). The only other report was of 2 on 26 Aug at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

Whimbrel: All: 1 juv. on 27 Aug at Saylorville Res. (*SJD, *JSi) and 1 on 1 Oct at Bjorkboda M. (*MJ)[record latest]. These are only the 4th and 5th fall records for Iowa.

Hudsonian Godwit: One with an injured leg was at Spring Run W.A. in Dickinson Co. on 19 Oct (*ETH-videotape). This species is quite rare in fall.

Marbled Godwit: All: 25 to 29 Sep at Coralville Res. (CE-details, THK-details)[2nd latest].

Ruddy Turnstone: First: 3 on 1 Aug at Rathbun Res. (RLC). Last: 2 from 5 to 13 Sep at Coralville Res. (THK). Other reports of 1 or 2 birds in August were from Port Neal (BFH), Saylorville Res. (m.ob.), Red Rock Res. (JLF), and Midwest Power Ponds (BKP/LJP).

Red Knot: All: 1 juv. on 13, 14 Aug at Rathbun Res. in Appanoose Co. (TNJ, *JLF, *THK-photos), 1 basic on 1 Sep at Saylorville Res. (*SJD), and 1 juv. on 29 Sep, 1, 3 Oct at Saylorville Res. (*SJD, *CE)[2nd latest]. A report of a bird in alternate plumage was received from 22 Jul (not 23 Jul as in summer field report) at Rathbun Res. (*TNJ)[record earliest].

Sanderling: Last: 6 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SJD). High count: 56 on 16 Sep at Saylorville Res. (SJD). There were many reports from five locations from early August to early November.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: Last: 2 on 12 Oct at Coralville Res. (JLF).



Solitary Sandpiper. Lake Macbride, Johnson County, 13 Oct 1995.

Photo by Thomas H. Kent

Western Sandpiper: First: 2 on 2 Aug at Zirbel Sl. (CJF). Last: 5 on 29 Sep at Coralville Res. (THK). There were nine other reports of singles from four locations.

White-rumped Sandpiper: 1 was identified on 11, 12 Sep at Coralville Res. (*THK).

Baird's Sandpiper: Last: 5 on 4 Nov at Saylorville Res. (MPR, SJD). High count: 20 on 31 Aug at Coralville Res. (CE).

Pectoral Sandpiper: Last: 8 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SJD). High count: 1,000 on 27 Aug at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper: A report is referred to the Records Committee.

Dunlin: First: 13 on 9 Sep at Coralville Res. (CE). Last: 1 on 22 Nov at Twelve Mile L. (SJD). High count: 23 on 22 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

Stilt Sandpiper: Last: 3 on 22 Oct at Colyn A. in Lucas Co. (RLC). High count: 48 on 16 Sep at Colyn A. (SJD).

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: Last: 12 Sep in Hardin Co. (MPR). High count: 40 on 27 Aug at Saylorville Res. (SJD). There were August reports from 10 locations and September reports from five locations from all areas of the state, a good showing for this species.

Ruff: A female in alternate plumage was found at Coralville Res. for 21 to 26 Aug (*THK-photo, *CE, *JLF)[record earliest of three fall records].

Short-billed Dowitcher: Last: 2 juv. on 21 Sep at Saylorville Res. (THK)[ties 2nd latest]. This species, which is usually common in August and early September, was only reported from four locations with up to 3 birds; however, this may be due to under-reporting.

Long-billed Dowitcher: First: 2 juv. on 21 Sep at Saylorville Res. (THK). Last: 1 juv. on 3 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SJD). High count: 29 on 9 Oct at Goodwater M. in Lucas Co. (TNJ).

Common Snipe: High count: 50 on 14 Sep at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK).

Wilson's Phalarope: All: 1 on 2 Aug at Fort Atkinson in Winneshiek Co. (DeC), 3 on 24 Aug at Red Rock Res. (THK), and 1 on 26 Aug at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

Red-necked Phalarope: All: 1 or 2 at Saylorville Res. on 24, 26 Aug and 2, 14 Sep (SJD, BE); up to 3 at Coralville Res. from 25 Aug to 18 Sep (m.ob.); 7 on 30 Aug at Spirit L. (SJD); and 4 on 12 Sep at L. Manawa (BKP/LJP).

Red Phalarope: All: 1 first-basic on 19 Sep at Saylorville Res. (*SJD)[2nd earliest] and 1 basic from 22 to 26 Oct at Saylorville Res. (*SJD, *THK, *JLF)[ties 2nd latest].

Jaeger species: A small, imm. bird was seen briefly on 24 Sep at L. Manawa (BKP/LJP).

Laughing Gull: All: 1 second alternate on 13 Aug at Saylorville Res. (*DT), 1 adult basic from 3 to 6 Sep at Runnells W.A. (*SJD-photo, *JSi, *THK, *JLF), 1 first basic on 30 Sep at Pleasant Valley in Scott Co. (*PCP)[3rd latest], and 1 adult basic on 19, 20 Oct at Saylorville Res. (*SJD)[2nd latest].

Franklin's Gull: High count: 40,000 on 7 Oct at Spirit L. (SJD). Other counts of 1,000 to 15,000 birds were noted from 30 Aug to 21 Oct at seven locations in central and western Iowa. Smaller numbers were seen in eastern Iowa, the most interesting of which were 75 in a parking lot in Davenport on 26 Oct (PCP). A late bird at Saylorville was nearly in alternate plumage on 18 Nov (THK) and fully alternate on 24, 30 Nov (SJD, JJD).

Bonaparte's Gull: First: 2 on 19 Sep at Saylorville Res. (SJD). Last: 5 on 30 Nov at Rathbun Res. (TNJ). High count: 419 on 3 Nov at Big Creek L. (SJD).

Mew Gull: Two reports are referred to the Records Committee.

Ring-billed Gull: The influx of this abundant species started early with 598 at Saylorville Res. by 24 Aug and 2,500 by 24 Oct (SJD).

California Gull: 1 in first-basic plumage was at Runnells W.A. on 3 Sep (*SJD-photo, *JSi) and below the dam at Red Rock Res. on 5, 6 Sep (*THK, *JLF).

Herring Gull: First: 4 imm. on 7 Aug at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

Thayer's Gull: First-basic birds were reported on 4 Nov at Coralville Res. (JLF)[3rd earliest] and 24 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SJD). The status of this species will change to regular, and I will no longer require documentation of first-year birds even though the identification can be difficult. Older birds, which are less common, should be documented. One such bird was reported without details.

Iceland Gull: A first-basic bird was at Saylorville Res. on 17, 18, and 30 Nov (*SJD-photo, *THK-photo, *JLF)[record earliest].

Lesser Black-backed Gull: A report will be referred to the Records Committee.

Glaucous Gull: All, first year: 12 to 19 Nov at Black Hawk L. (PE, THK-photo, *BFH)[2nd earliest], 14, 15 Nov at West Okoboji (*ETH)[3rd earliest], 16 to 30 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SJD, JJD, BE, DT), and 30 Nov at Red Rock Res. (JLF).

Black-legged Kittiwake: All: 1 molting from first alternate to second basic from 24 to 28 Sep at L. Manawa (*BKP/LJP-



*Glaucous Gull, Black Hawk Lake,
Sac County, 15 Nov 1995.
Photo by Thomas H. Kent*

- photo, *THK-photo, *JLF-photo)[record earliest], 1 first basic on 19 Nov at Saylorville Res. (*SJD, *JJD), and 1 first basic on 30 Nov at Red Rock Res. (JLF). The bird at L. Manawa is the oldest bird of this species documented in Iowa and also very early.
- Sabine's Gull:** All, juveniles: 1 on 6, 7 Sep at Terra L. in Polk Co. (*DT, *PJW, *SJD, *THK)[2nd earliest], 1-2 from 14 Sep to 8 Oct at Saylorville Res. (*SJD, *THK, *CE, m.ob.)(3rd earliest), 1 or 2 from 27 Sep to 14 Oct at Black Hawk L. (*PE, *JLF), and 1 on 22 Oct at Pool 13 in Clinton Co. (*PCP). This is a record number of birds for Iowa.
- Caspian Tern:** Last: 3 on 1 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SJD, CE). High count: 134 on 13 Sep at Saylorville Res. (SJD). This species left early this year.
- Common Tern:** First: 2 on 14 Aug at Rathbun Res. (JLF, THK-details). Last: 2 ad. on 7 Oct at Storm L. (SJD-details)[3rd latest]. High count: 13 ad. on 8 Sep at Saylorville Res. (SJD).
- Forster's Tern:** Last: 26 Oct at Red Rock Res. (JLF, THK). High count: 57 on 30 Aug at Spirit L. (SJD).
- Least Tern:** At Midwest Power Ponds in Pottawattamie Co., there were 2 ad. and 2 yg. on 2 Aug, 2 ad. and 3 yg. on 29 Aug, and 2 birds of 5 Sep (BKP/LJP). At Port Neal in Woodbury Co., there were 24 birds (15 ad., 2 first alternate, 4 fledglings, and 3 downy yg.) on 5 Aug (BFH). Elsewhere, migrants included 2 on 14 Aug at Rathbun Res. (JLF, THK) and 1 imm. on 30 Aug at Big Wall L. (SJD).
- Black Tern:** Last: 2 Sep at Midwest Power Ponds (BKP/LJP). High count: 250 on 22 Aug at Montrose (SJD). This species was common across Iowa from mid to late August.
- Black-billed Cuckoo:** Last: 4 on 8 Sep at Coralville Res. (THK).
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** Last: 25 Sep at Otter Creek M. (MPR) and Coralville Res. (THK).
- Snowy Owl:** All: 13 Nov at Spirit L. (Sean Peterson fide ETH).
- Long-eared Owl:** First: 25 Oct in Guthrie Co. (Jon Judson fide SJD). Other reports were from Big Creek S.P. (MPR), Crawford Creek R.A. in Ida Co. (PE), and Backbone S.P. (DLD).
- Short-eared Owl:** First: 2 Oct in Wapello Co. (TNJ). Other reports were from Appanoose, Cherokee, and Story counties.
- Common Nighthawk:** Last: 20 on 12 Oct at Saylorville Res. (DT). High counts: 70 on 2 Sep at Algona (MCK) and hundreds on 6 Sep at Johnston (DT).
- Whip-poor-will:** All: 1 singing on 8 Sep along Wapsipicon R. in Clinton Co. (SJD), 1 singing on 10 Sep near Booneville in Dallas Co. (DT), and 1 on 16 Sep at Five Ridge Prairie in Plymouth Co.
- Chimney Swift:** High counts: 400 on 12 Sep at Cedar Rapids (DLD) and 500 on 28 Sep at Ames (HZ).
- Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** Late birds include 1 on 7 Oct at Cherokee (DBi) and an imm. male at Gary Heiberger's feeder in Cedar Rapids on 16 Nov (*JLF, *THK-photos).
- Selasphorus species:** A Rufous-type hummingbird was at Barbara Stark's feeder in Cedar Rapids from at least 4 to 19 Nov (*JLF, *THK-photo, *CE, *PCP). It was captured on 25 Nov and placed in a greenhouse at Kirkwood Community College (Rob Bradley fide THK).
- Red-headed Woodpecker:** On 13 Sep, 43 were migrating past Hitchcock N.A. (BKP/LJP). In contrast to last year, the acorn crop was poor and most of the red-heads left the state.
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** Summer birds that likely nested included an ad. and juv. on 4 Aug at Oak Grove P. in Sioux Co. (JV), 5 including juveniles on 5 Aug at Effigy Mounds N.M. in Allamakee Co. (DeC), 3 on 7 Aug near Bellevue in Jackson Co. (PCP), and 2 imm. on 25 Aug in Dubuque Co. (PE).
- Northern Flicker:** Migrants were noted in north-central Iowa on 19, 20 Sep (THK).
- Pileated Woodpecker:** 1 was at A.A. Call S.P. in Kossuth Co. on 18 Nov (SJD).
- Olive-sided Flycatcher:** First: 1 on 19 Aug at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPR), Appanoose Co. (RLC), and Coralville Res. (THK). Last: 30 Sep at Saylorville Res. (SJD).
- Eastern Wood-Pewee:** Last: 1 singing on 17 Sep in Linn Co. (DLD). High count: 50 on 9 Sep at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (RLC).
- Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** First: 20 Aug at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPR). Last: 22 Sep at Hickory Hill P. (THK). There were seven other reports.
- Alder Flycatcher:** 1 on 31 Aug in Boone Co. was identified by its sharp "peep" note (DT)[2nd latest]. There is very little information on the fall migration of Alder Flycatcher in Iowa and surrounding states. If the call note is reliable for identification, perhaps Iowa birders with "good ears" can add further information on the fall occurrence of this species.
- Willow Flycatcher:** 1 was singing on 24 Aug at Saylorville Res. (SJD).
- Eastern Phoebe:** Last: 30 Oct at Swan L. in Carroll Co. (DS).
- Great Crested Flycatcher:** Last: 13 Sep at Hitchcock N.A. (BKP/LJP).
- Western Kingbird:** All: 1 on 7 Aug in Mills Co. (BKP/LJP), 3 on 7 Aug in Fremont Co. (SJD), and 1 on 24 Aug in Palo Alto Co. (THK).
- Eastern Kingbird:** Last: 13 Sep at Hitchcock N.A. (BKP/LJP). High count: 66 on 19 Aug in Appanoose Co. (RLC).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: All: 1 on 16 Oct in NW Dickinson Co. (*RRB, *ETH)[ties 2nd latest].

Purple Martin: At L. Manawa, 500 were present on 11 Aug and 50 on 23 Aug (BKP/LJP).

Tree Swallow: Last: 21 Oct at Eagle Point P. in Clinton (PCP). High count: 500 on 25 Sep at Coralville Res. (CE). Tree Swallow numbers were thought to be low across the state (THK). An albino was at Saylorville Res. on 21 Sep (JLF).

Cliff Swallow: Last: 1 crouched on the edge of the road on 11 Oct at Red Rock Res. (THK)[3rd latest].

Barn Swallow: Last: 3 Nov at Pleasant Creek L. (JLF, THK). High count: 2,000 on 19 Sep in north-central Iowa (THK). Barn Swallows blanketed the lakes in Iowa in mid-September and greatly outnumbered Tree Swallows (THK). Several were noted in late October at various locations.

Blue Jay: At Hitchcock N.A., 4,061 were migrating from 20 Sep to 4 Oct (BKP/LJP). On 30 Sep, 95 were migrating in Dickinson Co. (ETH). An albino was at Lake City on 22 Aug (DS).

Black-billed Magpie: 1 or 2 were seen in western Plymouth Co. on 9, 19 Nov (*BFH).

American Crow: Numbers at the Ames roost increased from 1,040 on 3 Sep to 3,500 on 22 Oct (JJD).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: First: 20 Aug near Ames (Jim Pease fide JJD). High count: 23 on 10 Sep at State Forest Nursery in Ames (SJD). The massive invasion was characterized by many reports from late August to mid-September. Although many of these birds probably passed through Iowa, this species remained common through the end of the period.

Brown Creeper: First: 21 Sep at Diamond L. (MPR) and Mason City (CJF).

Carolina Wren: 1 at West Okoboji on 18 Aug (LAS) was unusually far north. Other reports were from Polk, Story, Johnson, Mills, and Van Buren counties.

House Wren: Last: 8 Oct at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPR).

Winter Wren: First: 21 Sep at Diamond L. (MPR) and Decorah (DeC).

Sedge Wren: Last: 4 on 8 Oct at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK). High count: 24 on 4 Aug at Oak Grove P. (JV).

Marsh Wren: Last: 22 Oct at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: First: 2 on 23 Sep at Trumbull L. (LAS).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: First: 9 Sep at Moorehead P. (PE).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: Last: 22 Sep at Coralville Res. (THK).

Eastern Bluebird: Migrating flocks were noted on 21 Oct at Saylorville Res. (DT).

Veery: 1-4 were noted at four locations from 1 to 9 Sep.

Gray-cheeked Thrush: All: 8 Sep at Saylorville Res. and 17 Sep at Ames (SJD).

Swainson's Thrush: First: 1 on 4 Sep at Coralville Res. (THK). Last: 6 on 22 Sep at Hickory Hill P. (THK). High count: 12 heard at night on 7 Sep at Ames (SJD). There were two reports from October without details. My rule of thumb is that October and April thrushes are Hermits until proven otherwise.

Hermit Thrush: Last: 29 Oct at L. Ahquabi (JSI). Relatively late birds in northern Iowa were at Spirit L. on 4 Nov (LAS) and Kossuth Co. on 12 Nov (MCK). One was reported in September. My corollary rule is that September and May thrushes are not Hermits until proven otherwise. This does not mean that they cannot occur, but rather that our data on early and late dates is of no value if the records are not well substantiated for these difficult-to-identify species.

American Robin: High count: 350 at Lake City on 20 Oct (DS).

Varied Thrush: A female was at Cedar Rapids on 3 Nov (JLF).

Gray Catbird: Last: 30 Oct at Cedar Rapids (DLD). Another was at Saylorville Res. on 14 Oct (JRC).

Northern Mockingbird: All: 1 near Goose Lake in Clinton Co. on 9 Sep (SJD, JJD), 8 at Big Sand Mound Preserve on 10 Sep (PCP).

Brown Thrasher: Last: a fresh road-kill on 26 Nov in Wayne Co. (SJD). Another was in Union Co. on 22 Nov (SJD).

American Pipit: First: 17 Sep at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK) and Saylorville Res. (SJD). Last: 10 on 25 Oct at Saylorville Res. (THK). High count: 200 on 18 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

Northern Shrike: First: 21 Oct at Trumbull L. (LAS). There were 20 reports from 15 counties, with only two south of Interstate 80 in Louisa and Appanoose counties.

Loggerhead Shrike: 1 in Clay Co. on 19 Nov (LAS) was unusually far north.

White-eyed Vireo: All: 1 was calling at E. B. Lyons Nature Preserve in Dubuque Co. on 25 Aug (PE).

Bell's Vireo: All: 4 Aug at Oak Grove P. (JV), 23 Aug at Council Bluffs (BKP/LJP), and 10 Sep at Rathbun Res. (RLC).

Solitary Vireo: First: 30 Aug at Pilot Knob S.P. (SJD). Last: 8 Oct in Johnson Co. (DLD). High count: 7 on 12 Sep at Moorehead P. (PE).

Warbling Vireo: Last: 27 Sep at Grammer Grove W.A. (*MPR)[record latest].

Philadelphia Vireo: First: 24 Aug in Delaware Co. (JLF). Last: 27 Sep at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPR). There were 12 reports of 1-3 birds.

Red-eyed Vireo: Last: 27 Sep at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPR). High count: 33 on 8 Sep at Saylorville Res. (SJD).

Blue-winged Warbler: Last: 16 Sep at Stephen's S.F. in Lucas Co. (SJD, JJD)[ties 3rd latest]. There were four August and two September reports.

Golden-winged Warbler: First: 27 Aug at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPR). Last: 25 Sep at Luckenbill Woods in Des Moines Co. (SJD). High count: 5 on 1, 8 Sep at Hickory Hill P. (THK).

Tennessee Warbler: First: 20 Aug at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPR). Last: 15 Oct at Croton Unit in Lee Co. (RLC). High count: 10 on 9 Sep at Clinton (SJD) and Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (RLC).

Orange-crowned Warbler: First: 10 Sep at Big Sand Mounds Preserve (PCP). Last: 5 Nov at Cedar L. (CE). High count: 6 on 27 Sep at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPR).

Nashville Warbler: First: 21 Aug at Grammer Grove W.A. (Russ Widner fide MPR). Last: 13 Nov at Lock and Dam 9 in Allamakee Co. (DK-details)[record latest]. High count: 10 on 31 Aug at Spint L. (SJD).

Northern Parula: First: 3 Sep at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPR). Last: 23 Sep at Lake View (PE). A total of 7 birds were reported from five locations.

Yellow Warbler: Last: 13 Sep at Coralville Res. (THK). There were two other reports.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: First: 20 Aug at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPR) and Hickory Hill P. (THK). Last: 27 Sep at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPR). High count: 25 on 2 Sep at Hickory Hill P. (CE).

Magnolia Warbler: First: 31 Aug at Diamond L. (MPR). Last: 15 Oct at Croton U. (RLC). High count: 13 on 12 Sep at Moorehead P. (PE).

Cape May Warbler: First: 21 Aug at L. Meyer in Winneshiek Co. (DeC). Last: 18 Sep at Coralville Res. (THK). There were 18 birds reported from nine locations.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: First: 1 Sep at Hickory Hill P. (JLF). Last: 11 Sep at Lake View and Moorehead P. (PE). Males and females were observed at Hickory Hill P. from 1 to 10 Sep and seen by many observers. Other records were from Algona on 7 Sep (MCK), Saylorville Res. on 8, 9 Sep (SJD, DT), Coralville Res. on 8 Sep (JLF), Wildcat Den S.P. on 8 Sep (PCP), and A.A. Call S.P. on 10 Sep (MCK).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: First: 8 Sep at Algona (MCK). Last: 26 Nov at L. Ahquabi (JSi). High count: 120 on 15 Oct at Croton U. (RLC).

Black-throated Green Warbler: First: 23 Aug at Cardinal M. (DeC). Last: 27 Sep at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPR).

Blackburnian Warbler: First: 15 Aug at Moorehead P. (PE). Last: 22 Sep at Coralville Res. (THK). High count: 12 on 9 Sep at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. (RLC).

Yellow-throated Warbler: 1 at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 9 Sep (RLC) is one of few fall records.

Palm Warbler: First: 14 Sep at Saylorville Res. (SJD) and Coralville Res. (JLF).

Bay-breasted Warbler: First: 20 Aug at Moorehead P. (PE). Last: 23 Sep at Lake View (PE). High count: 40 on 10 Sep at A.A. Call S.P. (MCK).

Blackpoll Warbler: The only report was 1 on 16 Sep at Stephen's S.F. in Lucas Co. (SJD).

Cerulean Warbler: On 27 Aug, 3 males were singing at Dolliver S.P. in Webster Co. (MCK, LAS). This is another species that is rarely recorded in fall.

Black-and-white Warbler: First: 15 Aug at Moorehead P. (PE). Last: 4 Nov at Clear L. (Vergil Eness fide CJF-details)[record latest]. High count: 12 on 12 Sep at Moorehead P. (PE).

American Redstart: Last: 1 Oct at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPR). High count: 35 on 2 Sep at Hickory Hill P. (CE).

Worm-eating Warbler: 1 on 20 Aug at Croton U. (RLC) is one of few fall records.

Louisiana Waterthrush: There were two September reports without details.

Kentucky Warbler: All: 2 on 20 Aug at Croton U. (RLC) and 1 on 31 Aug at Walnut Woods in Polk Co. (DT).

Connecticut Warbler: All, with details: 31 Aug at Walnut Woods (DT), 1 Sep at Hickory Hill P. (THK), and 9 Sep at L. Meyer (DeC).

Mourning Warbler: First: 21 Aug at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPR). Last: 9 Sep at Clinton (SJD).

Common Yellowthroat: Last: 2 Oct at Otter Creek M. (MPR).

Wilson's Warbler: First: 20 Aug at Moorehead P. (PE). Last: 27 Sep at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPR).

Canada Warbler: First: 20 Aug at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPR), Hickory Hill P. (THK), and Croton U. (RLC). Last: 8 Oct at Moorehead P. (*PE)[record latest]. At White Pine Hollow in Dubuque Co., 2 birds on 10 Aug were probably summer residents (Molly Havlik fide JJD).

Scarlet Tanager: Last: 22 Sep at Hickory Hill P. (THK).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Last: 2 Oct in Clive at a feeder (JRC).

Blue Grosbeak: All: 7 Aug in Mills (BKP/LJP) and Fremont (SJD) counties, 9, 11 Aug in Pottawattamie Co. (BKP/LJP), and 2 Sep in Fremont Co. (BKP/LJP).

Indigo Bunting: Last: 29 Sep at Coralville Res. (THK).

Dickcissel: Last: 7 Oct in Dickinson Co. (SJD).

Spotted Towhee: All: 13 Oct at Marshalltown (Betty Savage fide MPr) and Moorehead P. (PE), and 22 Oct at Trumbull L. (LAS). The American Ornithologists' Union has split Rufous-sided Towhee into Eastern and Spotted towhees, so they should be reported separately from now on.

American Tree Sparrow: First: 19 Oct at Mason City (CJF).

Chipping Sparrow: Last: 5 Nov at Moorehead P. (PE) and Cedar Rapids (JLF).

Clay-colored Sparrow: All: 21 Sep at Rathbun Res. (SJD).

Vesper Sparrow: Last: 11 Nov in northeastern Linn Co. (THK-details).

Lark Sparrow: Last: 23 Aug at Big Creek L. (SJD).

Savannah Sparrow: Last: 22 Oct in Marshall Co. (MPr).

Henslow's Sparrow: 1 was still singing at L. Sugema in Van Buren Co. on 22 Aug (SJD).

Le Conte's Sparrow: All: 1-3 on 21, 23 Sep at Snake Creek M. (JLF, THK, CE), 1 on 7 Oct at Barringer Sl. (LAS), and 10 on 8 Oct at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK).

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow: All: 6 on 21 Sep at Snake Creek M. (JLF, THK) and 1 on 27 Sep at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK).

Fox Sparrow: First: 18 Sep at Cardinal M. (*DeC)[record earliest].

Lincoln's Sparrow: First: 2 Sep at Saylorville Res. (*BE)[2nd earliest]. Four others were noted between 9 and 18 Sep.

White-throated Sparrow: First: 9 Sep at Moorehead P. (PE).

White-crowned Sparrow: First: 27 Sep at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK).

Harris's Sparrow: First: 27 Sep at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK).

Dark-eyed Junco: First: 17 Sep at Rathbun Res. (RLC).

Lapland Longspur: First: 14 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SJD). High count: 1,000 on 12 Nov at Cone M. (THK). Only a few flocks were noted.

Snow Bunting: First: 11 Nov in Linn Co. (THK). There were 3 other reports.

Bobolink: All: 34 on 23 Aug at Cardinal M. (DeC), 50 at Ventura M. on 23 Aug (CJF), 50 on 24 Aug in Palo Alto Co. (THK), and 3 on 25 Aug at Union Slough N.W.R. (THK).

Eastern Meadowlark: Last: 2 on 15 Oct at Croton U. (RLC).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Last: 2 on 9 Sep at Green Island W.A. (SJD).

Rusty Blackbird: First: 6 on 11 Oct at Cardinal M. (DeC).

Brewer's Blackbird: All: 5 on 21 Oct at Brown's L. in Woodbury Co. (BFH).

Great-tailed Grackle: All: up to 7 at Midwest Power Ponds on 7, 11 Aug and 4 Sep (BKP/LJP); 7 on 25 Aug at Spring Run in Dickinson Co. (THK); 1 on 30 Aug at Big Wall L. (SJD); and 8 on 19 Sep at Dan Green Sl. in Clay Co. (THK).

Baltimore Oriole: High counts: 20 on 20 Aug at Runnells A. (JSi) and 40 on 7 Sep at Saylorville Res. (SJD). The American Ornithologists' Union has split Northern Oriole into Baltimore and Bullock's orioles, so they should be reported under the new names.

Bullock's Oriole: 1 male on 3 Sep at Red Rock Res. (*SJD) is one of few Iowa records of this "new" species. All of the records will be reviewed by the Records Committee.

Pine Grosbeak: A report will be referred to the Records Committee.

Purple Finch: First: 6 Sep at Grammer Grove W.A. (MPr). Small numbers were noted throughout the period.

House Finch: This common species was not reported.

White-winged Crossbill: All: 7 on 27 Nov at West Des Moines (SJD).

Common Redpoll: First: 29 Oct at Saylorville Res. (DT). High count: 25 on 23 Nov in Algona (MCK). Other reports from Allamakee, Clayton, Cerro Gordo, and Dickinson counties suggest the beginning of a mild invasion.

Pine Siskin: First: 3 Oct at Hitchcock N.A. (BKP/LJP). Most did not arrive until late October, but numbers were much up from last year's low.

Evening Grosbeak: First: 8 Nov at Mason City (CJF). Other reports were 1 on 18 Nov at Cedar Rapids (DLD) and 8 on 25 Nov at Liscomb (MPr). Many more were reported to the Birdline, but did not stay put for birders to see them.

Eurasian Tree Sparrow: The only reports were from Tama Road north of Burlington.

COMMENT

The database comprised 34 reports and 84 documentations (of 28 species). I made 1,582 entries into a computer database. Compared to last fall, there were fewer reports, the same number of documentations, and more entries.

For rarities, including some regular species that are rare for the dates given and easy to confuse with another species, only those records with documentation are

cited. I requested verification on 10 reports of more easily identified species that were seen at unusual dates. I received useful additional information on each of these sightings, which will be placed on file. The date was incorrect for two of the reports, which suggests that other dates in Field Reports may be incorrect. It would be helpful if contributors specifically review their reports for dates that seem out of line before they send them in. Also, if you spot an incorrect date in the Field Reports, report it to the author so that a correction can be published.

All reports were received on time, which is greatly appreciated. The quality of the reports was excellent, and some provided an unbelievable amount of data on fall birds in Iowa.

CONTRIBUTORS (* = DOCUMENTATION ONLY)

Dick Bierman (DBi), Cherokee; Dennis Carter (DeC), Decorah; Jane R. Clark (JRC), Clive; Raymond L. Cummins (RLC), Centerville; David L. Dankert (DLD), Cedar Rapids; James J. Dinsmore (JJD), Ames; Stephen J. Dinsmore (SJD), Ames; Chris Edwards (CE), North Liberty; Bery Engebretsen (BE), Des Moines; Peter Ernzen (PE), Ida Grove; Carolyn J. Fischer (CJF), Mason City; *Charles R. Fuller (CRF), Burlington; James L. Fuller (JLF), Iowa City; Douglas C. Harr (DCH), Larchwood; *Terry J. Hulsebus (TJH), Denison; James Huntington (JH), Iowa City; Bill F. Huser (BFH), South Sioux City, NE; *Maridel Jackson (MJ), Ankeny; Thomas N. Johnson (TNJ), Mystic; Matthew C. Kenne (MCK), Algona; Thomas H. Kent (THK), Iowa City; Darwin Koenig (DK), Ankeny; Sharron R. Laub (SRL), Rippey; Babs K. Padelford (BKP), Bellevue, NE; Loren J. Padelford (LJP), Bellevue, NE; Marietta A. Petersen (MAP), Walnut; Peter C. Petersen (PCP), Davenport; Beth Proescholdt (BPr), Liscomb; Mark Proescholdt (MPR), Liscomb; *John Rutenbeck (JR), Burlington; Lee A. Schoenewe (LAS), Spencer; Jim Sinclair (JSi), Indianola; Dale Stone (DS), Lake City; Dennis Thompson (DT), Johnston; Ed Thelen (ETH), Spirit Lake; John Van Dyk (JV), Sioux Center; Phil J. Walsh (PJW), Des Moines; and Hank Zaletel, (HZ) Nevada.

211 Richards Street, Iowa City, IA 52246

LONG-TAILED JAEGER IN SAC COUNTY

PETER ERNZEN

On the afternoon of 4 September 1994, my 3 1/2 year old son, Joshua and I were bird watching at Tomahawk Marsh 2.9 miles north of Lake View in Sac County. Tomahawk Marsh is divided in half by county road M68. After viewing both sides of the marsh, I decided to concentrate our efforts on the west



side. We drove to a gravel road that borders the north boundary of the marsh. While I was viewing several ducks and a Common Moorhen, my attention was distracted by a car horn on M68. Looking in the direction of the noise, I saw several Great Blue Herons flying west. Much to my utter amazement the distinctive form of a Long-tailed Jaeger followed the procession of Great Blue Herons. The two features that were immediately recognizable were the two long pointed tail feathers and the distinctive diamond-shaped tail. In flight the bird appeared to be medium gull sized, but flew tern like.

I followed the bird in flight until it landed on one of the many muskrat dens in the marsh. I immediately observed the bird for about 15 minutes through my spotting scope. The following features were observed as the bird rested: gray body, white chest, black bill, and black crown that came to a point on the back of the head.

Knowing the rarity of this species in Iowa, I decided to attempt to get a closer view of the bird. I was able to approach to within 15-20 feet. In addition to the above details, I was able to discern an inch-wide patch of yellow wash below the eye that extended in front of and behind the eye. When the bird flew, I returned to my car and raced home to report my finding.

On 5 September, Tim Schantz relocated the bird at the southeast corner of Black Hawk Lake five miles southeast of Tomahawk Marsh. The bird stayed in the area for the next 10 days, thrilling birders from Iowa and surrounding states. Interestingly, on the same day an immature Sabine's Gull was also located in the same area. For the next several days, I fielded calls from around the state as to where and if the bird was still around.

This is only the second sighting of this arctic species in Iowa. The previous record was of one collected near Lone Tree in Johnston County in 1907 (Anderson, *Auk* 25:215, 1908). This is the most common of the jaeger species in the arctic, but, because of its highly pelagic winter preferences, it is the least encountered of the three jaeger species in the interior, with only 34 other sightings in the lower 48 states (T. H. Kent, personal communication).

401 Taylor, Ida Grove, IA 51445

PROBABLE BREEDING OF BLACK-HEADED GULLS IN NORTHWESTERN IOWA

STEPHEN J. DINSMORE

At approximately 11:25 a.m. on 2 August 1994, I stopped at the northwestern end of Spirit Lake in Dickinson County. A number of gulls and terns were resting on a rock jetty south of the road, just south of the Iowa-Minnesota state line. Among the gulls was an adult Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*), recognizable by its size, blood red bill and legs, dark hood, and very pale gray mantle. I watched the bird as it perched on the jetty for 17 minutes, when it flew and disappeared to the southwest over Spirit Lake. The bird was slightly smaller than nearby Ring-billed Gulls and was generally a longer, more slender gull. The long legs were bright red. The bill was dark red, slender, straight, and pointed at the tip. The bird still had a well-defined dark brown hood, although there were numerous white flecks, especially around the base of the bill and on the forehead. The neck, breast, belly, undertail, and uppertail were white. The mantle was very pale gray, the same color as the upperwings. The wing pattern was as follows: inner primaries and secondaries and their coverts were pale gray, outer primaries and coverts were white, black tips to at least the outer six primaries, undersides of inner primaries black, underside of outer primary white. The wings extended well beyond the tail tip when the bird was perched.



A short time later, at approximately 12:10 p.m., I stopped to scan a small flock of gulls resting on an island at the Kettleston Waterfowl Production Area (WPA) on the west side of Spirit Lake. After a few minutes, I found a very strange looking gull

walking alone along the edge of the water. My first thought was that the bird might be a juvenile Sabine's Gull. After about 20 minutes, I concluded the bird was a juvenile Black-headed Gull. Almost immediately, an adult Black-headed Gull landed in my scope view and fed the bird a large minnow. The juvenile bird was similar to the adult in size, being slightly larger than a Franklin's Gull. The overall appearance was very rust-colored. The bill was bicolored with the basal two thirds pale pink and the distal one third dark. The head was mostly white, except for a brown cap and a blackish auricular patch. The bird had an incomplete white eyering that was broken in front of the eye. There was a white collar across the back of the neck. The lower hindneck, mantle, and upperwings were dark brown with a scalloped appearance. The mantle and hindneck were slightly darker than the upperwings. The scalloped appearance was created by the buffy or gold tips to the scapulars. The primaries were black, with some white on the outer edge of the wing visible on the perched bird. The underparts were white. On the foreneck, brown color extending forward from each bend in the wing met to form a complete bib. The bib was widest on the sides of the neck, but was connected by only a thin brown line. The tail was white with a narrow black terminal band on the upper surface. The legs were flesh-colored. The upperwing pattern was very striking. There was a brown carpal bar. The outer primaries and tips of several inner primaries were solid black. The secondary coverts were pale gray. The tips of all secondaries were black, creating a black bar along the trailing edge of the wing. The remainder of the upperwing was white. In flight, the undersides of the flight feathers appeared black while the underwing coverts appeared white. The adult with the young bird was very similar to the adult I had seen earlier at the north end of Spirit Lake, and I initially assumed they were the same individual. However, I returned to the north end of Spirit Lake at approximately 4 p.m. that afternoon and found an adult bird still present there. Upon closer examination, the adult at Kettleton WPA had a much more complete hood that lacked white flecking. I also noted that the bird had a partial white eyering, broken in front of the eye. On at least two occasions, the adult at Kettleton WPA attacked Great Blue Herons, presumably in defense on the young bird. Both times, the adult gull repeatedly gave a call that was reminiscent of an American Crow, but higher-pitched.

I observed these birds again on 3 and 5 August 1994. At least one adult remained in the area through 12 August 1994 (Kent 1995). These represent only the second and third records of Black-headed Gull in Iowa. The first record was of an adult on 2, 4 November 1989 at Saylorville Reservoir (Dinsmore 1993). Another adult appeared at Big Creek Lake from 17 to 23 November 1994 (Kent 1995). This species is a rare vagrant to the upper Midwest with fewer than 10 records each from Minnesota, Nebraska, Illinois, and Missouri. All records are of single birds.

Black-headed Gulls first bred in North America in Newfoundland in 1977 (Finch 1978). They have nested only once in the United States, in Massachusetts in 1984 (Holt et al. 1986). There are a few summer records for the upper Midwest, but the only one suggestive of possible breeding was the adult from 28 May into July 1986 in a large Franklin's Gull colony at North Heron Lake in Jackson County, Minnesota (Janssen 1986), about 20 miles northwest of Spirit Lake. A strong case can be made that Black-headed Gulls bred in northwestern Iowa or adjacent Minnesota in 1994. The young are fed and cared for by both parents and leave the nest after about 10 days, but remain nearby. The fledging period is about 35 days (Cramp 1983). While the juvenile bird was clearly capable of flight, it did not appear to be a strong flier. The presence of both adults with the juvenile also supports breeding nearby since both adults feed the young until fledging, usually at intervals of 45 minutes (Brandl and

Nelsen 1988). It is unlikely that the adults would disperse far from the nest site while continuing to feed the young. It seems reasonable to conclude that the birds bred nearby, possibly at or within a few miles of Kettleston WPA. It also seems certain that the birds bred close enough to constitute the second breeding record for this species in the United States.

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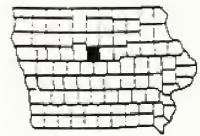
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4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames IA 50014

WHIMBREL IN HAMILTON COUNTY

THOMAS H. KENT AND JAMES L. FULLER

On 24 May 1995 at 10:40 a.m., we were driving south on U.S. 69 in north-central Hamilton County when Kent saw a large shorebird silhouetted against the water in a flooded farm field near the road. As we turned around and stopped to look at it, we both shouted "Whimbrel" simultaneously. It was a large



brownish shorebird roughly the size of a godwit with long, relatively thick gray bill that became markedly decurved over its distal half. The angle of the bill with the head made the bird look flat headed. There was a distinct white eye line and dark cap with a thin central crown stripe. Otherwise, the bird was a nondescript brown--lighter and plainer below and flecked with feather edgings above. The legs were dark pale gray and the eye was dark. The only other large shorebird with a decurved bill that occurs in Iowa is Long-billed Curlew, which is a much larger bird with longer bill, cinnamon coloration, and no crown stripe. Although we immediately called several birders, to the best of our knowledge, no other birders saw this bird. The Whimbrel is a Casual species in Iowa with records from 6 of the last 10 years, most from mid to late May.

211 Richards Street, Iowa City, IA 52246 and 6 Longview Knoll, RR 6, Iowa City, IA 52240

I.O.U. BUSINESS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CAROL THOMPSON (PRESIDING), MARY KUHLMAN, SECRETARY

Tama, 5 November 1995, 10:45 a.m. to 1:25 p.m.

Present: Pam Allen, Ann Barker, John Fleckenstein, Bud Gode, Ann Johnson, Matt Kenne, Mary Kuhlman, Carol Thompson.

The proposed budget was presented. It was moved (Gode, seconded by Kenne) to approve the budget. Passed.

Committee Reports

Records: This committee met on 22 October 1995. They are up to date on review of records. The updated Operating Procedures Manual for the committee was distributed. It was moved (Barker, seconded by Gode) that Jim Fuller serve a term on this committee through 2002. Passed.

The board discussed the importance of archiving records and recommended that one copy of all records dating back to 1981 be archived. Carol Thompson will follow up on this with the committee.

Membership: No report.

Publications: John Fleckenstein reported that he will soon be moving to Olympia, WA. It was moved (Gode, seconded by Allen) that Jim Durbin serve on the committee until 1997 for the remainder of John Fleckenstein's term. Passed. The committee will need to appoint a new chair.

Education Booklet: No report.

Spring Count: Carol Thompson reported for Pete Petersen. Plans are ready for the spring count on 8 May 1996. The board recommends archiving the data. Carol will follow up on this.

Field Trips: Ann Johnson reported that the 2 December 1995 trip to northeastern Iowa has been cancelled. Plans for next year are being made. Jim Fuller has volunteered to lead a trip to Duluth in January or February. This raised the question of the possible need for liability insurance. Ann Barker, John Fleckenstein, and Carol Thompson will check into this issue.

Breeding Bird Atlas: Carol Thompson reported that the introductory chapters are finished and are being edited. Pictures have been selected, and some will need to be purchased. Publication is slated for 1996.

Rare Bird Alert: No report.

Nominating: Carol Thompson reported that this committee is currently working on a slate of officers for the next election.

Big Day: Pam Allen reported for Eugene Armstrong. Reid Allen has replaced Ray Cummins on the committee.

Environmental: The president has appointed Jim Dinsmore, Bob Cecil, and Beth Proescholdt to this committee. Letters from three groups seeking our support will be forwarded to the committee for review. The purpose of the committee is to review requests to the I.O.U. for support of various environmental causes. The committee may also suggest other issues as appropriate for the organization to support. The committee will report to the President, who will forward their recommendations to the Board of Directors for consideration. Board decisions can be made outside of formal meetings to facilitate a more immediate response if necessary.

Library-Historical: This committee has not met since the 1980s. The board recommends that the committee meet annually, that committee membership be updated, and that the duties of the committee be broadened to include archiving such records as Spring Count, Big Day, Records Committee, membership records, and publications.

Other Items

Partners in Flight: Beth Brown and Carol Thompson will represent the I.O.U. at the planning meeting for this group.

Feeder Survey: Carol Thompson reported that it is not certain that the D.N.R. will be able to continue to fund this project. In the future, the I.O.U. may need to consider establishing a committee and providing funds for this project to continue.

Future meetings: The spring 1996 meeting will be in Burlington on 18-20 May 1996 at the Ramada Inn. It was moved (Allen, seconded by Gode) to pay the \$50 deposit for the meeting rooms, Passed. It was moved (Gode, seconded by Allen) to have the fall 1996 meeting in Mason City on 6-8 September.

1996. Passed. Planning has begun for the spring 1997 joint meeting with South Dakota and Nebraska. Iowa City is a possible site for the fall 1997 meeting. Ann Johnson announced that the I.O.U. membership brochure and the checklist will be on the Internet. Matt Kenne requested that more photographs be included in *Iowa Bird Life*. John Fleckenstein will speak to the editor about this possibility. A request for use of I.O.U. publications by UnCover, a document search company, was discussed. It was agreed to enter into an arrangement whereby UnCover could retain optical images of any requested document. The I.O.U. will receive copyright royalties for any of our publications which are used. Carol Thompson will write to the company and sign the necessary agreement. Navstar, a publishing house, inquired about inclusion of I.O.U. in an Internet guide. No interest was expressed. Carol Thompson will write a reply declining their offer. The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

BOOK REVIEW

Terns of Europe and North America by Klaus Malling Olsen and Hans Larsson. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1995, 175 pp., hardbound \$39.50. This comprehensive field guide covers 23 species of terns (skimmers not included) that occur regularly in this region. The book includes detailed descriptions of the birds' plumages, information on geographical variation, color plates and photographs illustrating the various plumages and ages, range maps showing worldwide distribution, a quick key to identification, and a summary of several measurements. The introduction is very good, especially the detailed section on plumages and molt.

The strength of the book lies in the detail provided. For example, the section on Forster's Tern has two plates illustrating the various plumages (12 birds) and nine photos. Standard field guides tend to illustrate adults in alternate and basic plumages, and juvenal plumage. I found the plumage descriptions to be detailed and very useful. The section on measurements was informative, but would be of little use to most birders. For those species with some geographical variation, these measurements might be useful, although they would be of little value unless the bird was in the hand. The sample size used for some of the measurements was sometimes very small (<10 birds). The quick key to identification provided a nice, condensed summary of the key field marks of each species.

This book does have a few shortcomings. The colors on some of the plates were too pale. For example, the adult Forster's Tern in Plate 27 is illustrated as nearly pure white, even though the mantle and upperwings are a darker gray in life. For some species, e.g., Caspian Tern, the shape of the bird seemed to be inaccurate. I also thought that for some species the photos could have been better. For example, there is no good flight shot of a breeding adult Black Tern. For the noddies, the only photo of a juvenile bird is of one in the hand. Also, some of the photos could have been sharper. In summary, I thought the authors did a very good job of covering the material and would recommend this book to birders who want a more detailed treatment of these tern species.--Stephen J. Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Drive, Ames, IA 50014

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

This issue begins the 66th year of publication of *Iowa Bird Life*. In the rush to put together the five-year index that completed the last issue of 1995, I neglected to recognize the many people that made that five-year set possible. Thus, one issue late, I take this opportunity to thank those individuals. First, five individuals served as editors of the field reports that appeared from 1991 to 1995. Thomas Kent and Ross

Silcock served throughout that period with Tom compiling the spring and fall reports and Ross the winter season. Ross also continued to compile the Christmas Bird Count report. Three other individuals also served as editor or co-editors for one or more field reports: Jim Fuller, Carl Bendorf, and Stephen Dinsmore. I hope that other members of the I.O.U. will join me in thanking these individuals for the superb job they do in compiling hundreds of reports of species from throughout the state and putting together timely and concise reports on birds in Iowa. These reports provide a wealth of data on Iowa's birds and, over time, provide our best "picture" of the continuing changes in the status and distribution of birds in Iowa. I believe that these reports will be used by bird enthusiasts for generations to come. A second thank you goes to all of you who sent in seasonal reports to the field reports editors. Obviously without your contributions, the field report editors would have nothing to write about. As these editors have noted previously, the quantity and quality of reports in Iowa continues to improve, an indication of the ability of observers in the state. Pete Petersen assumed responsibility for compiling the Spring Bird Count, two of which have now been published. I thank him for that contribution and also the numerous individuals who contributed articles, notes, and letters for publication in *Iowa Bird Life*. I counted more than 70 individuals who contributed to the journal in the past five years, an indication of widespread support for the journal. Finally, I thank all of the members of the I.O.U. for your support of the organization and this journal. It has been a challenging five years with its ups and downs. I hope that I make fewer mistakes in the future, and that I can improve the journal. Let me know of your thoughts and concerns.--J.J.D.

FIFTY YEARS AGO IN IOWA BIRD LIFE

The lead article was a short discussion of the Northern Goshawk in Iowa by Jack Musgrove. His conclusion that it was a rare winter visitor suggests its status has not changed since then. An article by Myrle Jones, for years one of Iowa's most active birders and banders, discusses "Gasoline ornithology", his name for birding from a car. He notes that access to an automobile certainly changed birding from a hobby that often had great physical demands. A short biographical sketch describes Ira Gabrielson, a native of Sioux Rapids, Iowa. Gabrielson wrote several articles on the breeding biology of Iowa birds as well as a detailed list of the birds of Marshall County. He joined the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service where he eventually became head of the organization. Much of the issue is devoted to a summary of the 1945 Christmas Bird Count. In all, a total of 65 species were found on the 20 counts held in Iowa, somewhat less than what the top individual counts now find. The top individual count was 35 species at Des Moines. Probably the most interesting finds were a Prairie Falcon at Sioux City and a Vesper Sparrow at Ledges State Park. Only five waterfowl species were found, including only two Mallards and no Canada Geese. Times have changed.--ed.



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The IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. *Iowa Bird Life* and *I.O.U. News* are quarterly publications of the Union.

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W. Ross Silcock, Christmas Bird Count & Winter Field Reports Editor, Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653

SUBSCRIPTION/MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Institutions may subscribe to *Iowa Bird Life* for \$15 per year. Individuals may join the Iowa Ornithologists' Union according to the following membership classes: Regular (\$15); Regular as spouse or minor child of another Regular member without publications (\$4 first additional family member, \$2 each additional family member); Contributing (\$15 plus any additional tax-deductible contribution to the I.O.U.); and Life (\$300 as single payment or \$75 for each of four years). Members will also receive the quarterly *I.O.U. News* and are eligible to vote and hold office in the Union. Send subscriptions, membership payments, or address changes to Pam Allen, 1601 Pleasant St., West Des Moines, IA 50265.

INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other materials relating to birds and bird finding in Iowa should be sent to the editor. Accepted manuscripts will generally be published promptly, depending on space available, with the following absolute deadlines: 15 November for the Winter issue; 15 February for the Spring issue; 15 May for the Summer issue; and 15 July for the Fall issue. Most manuscripts will be refereed. All material should be typed double-spaced or hand printed in ink on 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper. Authors should pattern their style after a current issue of the journal. If you want more detailed guidelines or advice regarding the appropriateness of your topic for *Iowa Bird Life*, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the editor. Manuscripts may also be submitted on computer disk (Word 4.0 for Macintosh or compatible programs). Please submit one printed copy of the manuscript with the disk.

OFFICERS OF THE IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

Carol Thompson, President (1997), 1116 Muscatine Avenue, Iowa City, IA 52240
Ann Johnson, Vice-President (1997), 532 120th Avenue, Norwalk, IA 50211
Mary Kuhlman, Secretary (1996), 1300 N. 29th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501
Pam Allen, Treasurer (1996), 1601 Pleasant St., West Des Moines, IA 50265
Other members of the Board of Directors: Ann Barker (1997), Beth Brown (1996), O. J. (Bud) Gode (1997), Matthew C. Kenne (1997), and Tim Schantz (1996).

STANDING COMMITTEES

Publications: Ann M. Barker, Dan Dorrance, Jim Durbin, David C. Edwards, Harold White.

Records: Thomas H. Kent (secretary), Tanya Bray, Ray Cummins, Ann Johnson, Francis L. Moore, Tim Schantz, Ross Silcock.

Membership: Diane Porter (chair), Pam Allen, Beth Brown, Laura Jackson, Curt Nelson.

Library/Historical: Thomas H. Kent, Pete Petersen, James P. Sandrock, Hank Zaletel.

UPCOMING MEETINGS OF IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

18-20 May 1996, Burlington

6-8 September 1996, Mason City

May 1997-joint with South Dakota and Nebraska

FIELD REPORTS

Anyone observing birds in Iowa is encouraged to report their findings on a quarterly basis to the Field Reports editors. Sample reporting and documentation forms suitable for duplication are available from the editor (send self-addressed stamped envelope to Jim Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50014). An article describing the reporting process is also available.

Deadlines for receipt of field reports are as follows:

*Winter (Dec, Jan, Feb)--3 March (W. Ross Silcock, Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653)

*Spring (Mar, Apr, May)--3 June (Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246)

*Summer (Jun, Jul)--3 August (James J. Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50014)

*Fall (Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov)--3 December (Thomas H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246)

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

*Deadline for receipt of reports: 15 January. For forms and instructions write: W. Ross Silcock, Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653.

IOWA BIRDLINE 319-338-9881

The birdline is a recorded summary of interesting recent bird sightings in Iowa. At the end of the report you can leave a message and report recent sightings. Be sure to give your name and phone number as well as the location of the bird and date seen. Call in as soon as possible after sighting a rare bird. Jim Fuller checks the reports daily and updates the recording on Monday, so make sure Sunday sightings are reported by Sunday night.

I.O.U. NEWS

Send items of interest for the newsletter to the editors (J. Hank and Linda Zaletel, 1928 6th St., Nevada, IA 50201).

MATERIALS AVAILABLE

The following materials may be obtained by writing the editorial office (Iowa Bird Life, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50014):

*Order form for back issues of *Iowa Bird Life*: send self-addressed stamped envelope.

*Field Checklist of Iowa Birds--1992 Edition: 6 for \$1.00, postpaid. Also available at annual meetings.

REPORTING NEBRASKA BIRDS

Sightings of Nebraska birds, including those within the Nebraska portion of DeSoto N.W.R., should be reported to Loren and Babs Padelford, 1405 Little John Road, Bellevue, NE 68005. Formats for reporting and documentation are the same as for Iowa. The Nebraska Bird Line, available 24 hours a day, is 402-292-5325. Iowa birders are encouraged to report their Nebraska sightings to this number.

ADDRESS CHANGES

Please send address changes/corrections to Pam Allen, 1601 Pleasant St., West Des Moines, IA 50265.

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